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THE  
EDINBURGH • REVIEW

OR

*CRITICAL JOURNAL:*

FOR

JANUARY, 1848 . . . . APRIL, 1848.

*TO BE CONTINUED QUARTERLY.*

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1848.

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THE  
EDINBURGH REVIEW,

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ART. I.—*Histoire des Girondins.* Par M. A. DE LAMARTINE :  
Paris, 1847. 8 vols. 8vo.

**P**UBLIC expectation could not fail to be greatly raised, when it was announced that M. de Lamartine was employed in writing the history of some of the most remarkable men, by whom one of the most remarkable periods and parties of the French Revolution was most distinguished. Little doubt could exist that the labours of such a writer would produce a striking and attractive work. But there were some who expected that M. de Lamartine's history would still more interest, and possibly instruct his countrymen, by offering a view of the Revolution very different in its political bearing from that, in which it has been the tendency of recent writers to represent, and of the French public in general to regard it. Though an adherent of the existing dynasty and institutions, though in fact at present a member of a liberal opposition, yet M. de Lamartine's attachment to the Church of Rome and the romantic character of his writings, together with the personal associations which belong to religious and literary sympathies, have throughout the vicissitudes of politics enabled him to continue in friendly relations with the party most opposed to the Revolution, and its results. The Fauxbourg St. Germain regarded him as a man whose conclusions and votes were mischievous: but whose writings and speeches were calculated to serve their cause, by fostering a spirit opposed to the democratic tendencies of modern France. They trusted that, even if he did not yet

ture openly to assail the principles of the Revolution, and defend the *ancien régime*, a sentimental and imaginative writer could not tell the tale of those times without exciting sympathy in behalf of those who had fallen victims to their devotion to the altar and the throne, and arousing indignation against the cause that was soiled by the irreligion and atrocities of the Commune and the Jacobins. They hoped that while the massacres of September, the various horrors of the Reign of Terror, and the enormities of Lyons and Nantes, would be portrayed with fearful distinctness, the poetical historian would depict in the most brilliant colours the chivalrous constancy of the aristocracy, would exert his tragic powers in describing the sufferings and courage of the Royal Family, and immortalise in glowing narrative the heroic deeds done in La Vendée.

The opposite party agreed in expecting very much the same results from the pencil of M. de Lamartine. Never were general anticipations more signally disappointed. The tale of the victims of the Revolution is told with pathetic splendour by M. de Lamartine: every incident of suffering, every act of courage, elicits his generous sympathy. But his heart is with the Revolution throughout all its phases. While he marks and condemns its crimes and excesses with strict justice, his master feelings are a deep conviction of its paramount necessity and rectitude, and a patriotic pride in its triumph over domestic as well as foreign foes. He has no regrets for the ancient institutions of France, but sees in their downfall the triumph of the first principles of justice and reason. His imagination, instead of lingering amid the ruins of monarchy and feudalism, contemplates with evident predilection the visions of the republic. Far from branding the Revolution with a general character of irreligion, on account of the excesses of the mob or of some few crazy fanatics of infidelity, he is rather disposed to regard the whole movement as one of a religious nature, having its origin in a deep, dim, but sincere determination to realise the spirit of Christianity in the arrangements of society and the institutions of government. The opponents of the Revolution he judges with mild forbearance; but he still judges them, in order to condemn them as men who withstood the right. The very sympathy which he expresses and excites in behalf of the Royal Family by the minute description of their sufferings, their affection, and their patience, renders more damaging to the royal cause the stern impartiality with which he criticises their acts, delineates their characters, and denounces their misconduct, as the main cause of the calamities in which both themselves and their country became so fatally involved. The real

heroes of his story are the individuals who promoted the Revolution with the greatest vigour, and followed out its principles with the sternest determination to their most extreme consequences. Even the party whose fortunes he has made the nominal subject of his narrative are too pale a type of republican enthusiasm and energy to satisfy his daring fancy. From first to last, the principal personage of the drama is Robespierre. On him the reader's attention is gradually concentrated more and more, as on the living emblem of the Revolution, of its principle, of its energy, of its moral grandeur, and of the excesses by which that grandeur was chequered; and with his fall the narrative ends as with the cessation of all that could give an interest in its story.

The appearance of a work of a character and tendency so absolutely the reverse of all that had been anticipated from the author, while its literary merits surpassed even the most favourable expectations, could not fail to create an extraordinary sensation in France. No work that has appeared in our day seems to have created such a ferment in Paris. The Royalists, and all who, without being actually supporters of the ancient dynasty and order of things, are more or less opposed to the spirit of the Revolution, shrank at the deadly wound inflicted on their feelings and their cause by what they had deemed a friendly hand. The Christian poet seemed to carry away religion and sentiment from their ranks into those of their opponents. The adherents of the Revolution hailed with joy and gratitude the unexpected accession of a new and potent ally. Discouraged by Conservative opinion, and denounced by his old friends of the Faubourg, M. de Lamartine has been rewarded by the general acknowledgments with which his countrymen have received his vindication of the national character, and his justification of the spirit which the Revolution has made the spirit of the French people.

Independently, however, of these adventitious causes of a momentary notoriety, the *History of the Girondins* is a work that possesses solid claims to a more durable and extensive reputation. We cannot receive it as a satisfactory history of the period of which it treats. In fact the author, though he has given it the name of a 'history,' is content that it should be classed in a humbler category. 'As for the title of this book,' he says in his preface, 'we have only adopted it for want of any other word to designate a narrative. This book has none of the pretensions of history, and must not assume its dignity. It is an intermediate work between history and memoirs. Events occupy in it a subordinate place to men and ideas. It is full of per-

‘sonal details. These details are the physiognomy of characters : it is through them that the latter impress themselves on the imagination. Great writers have already written the chronicles of this memorable epoch. Others will ere long write them. It will be doing us injustice to compare us with them. They have produced, or will produce, the history of an age: we have produced nothing but a *study* of a group of men, and of some months of the Revolution.’

With this scheme of his work before him, M. de Lamartine has not thought it necessary to give a detailed record of all the events of the period. He assumes that his reader has already acquired this knowledge from other sources. Relying on this he has not, as he tells us, scrupled in some instances to heighten the effect by neglecting the exact order of time. It is much to be regretted, however, that such omissions and inversions are accompanied by more serious defects, which impair our confidence in the accuracy of the narrative, and consequently in the justice of the views based upon it. The intermediate position between history and memoirs which the author would assume for his work is one which, unfortunately, possesses the claims of neither, as an authority concerning matters of fact. Its statements are not given, as in memoirs, on the author's personal knowledge; nor are they drawn, as in a trustworthy history, from original accounts of a known and authentic character. Incidents, which give an entirely new aspect to some of the principal persons, and to some even of the most important events of the period, are stated on the authority of no published work, or accessible record (in which case the authenticity or value of the statement could have been tested), but simply on that of private documents, which the reader has no means of examining for himself, — of conversations with unnamed individuals, the trustworthiness as well as the effect of whose evidence we are obliged to take entirely on credit from our author. We have not the slightest distrust of M. de Lamartine's assurance that he has made a most scrupulous investigation into the statements from which his narrative has been prepared. ‘Although,’ he says, ‘we have not encumbered the narrative with notes, with references, and with *pièces justificatives*, there is not one of our statements which is not authorised either by authentic memoirs, or by unpublished memoirs, or by autograph correspondence, which the families of the principal personages have been pleased to confide to us, or by oral and trustworthy information collected from the lips of the last survivors of this great epoch.’ The consequence of this indisposition to encumber the story with the ordinary proofs of historical accuracy is, that when

we get beyond the most familiar incidents, we never know the value of a single statement that is made: for instance, whether it is derived from most intelligent and impartial witnesses, or from the most discredited and heated partisans; whether it is capable of being supported by a reference to some indisputable and acknowledged authority, or rests entirely on the private conversation or letter of some survivor of the Revolution, whose good faith or judgment it is possible that particular circumstances may have led M. de Lamartine to over-estimate. This is a fault peculiarly to be regretted in an author, whose poetical reputation lays him open to the imputation of not being much in the habit of investigating closely, or weighing accurately, the evidences of historical facts: and the very character of whose work suggests the suspicion that he may have been ready to take on insufficient evidence any striking statement that would heighten the effect of his narrative, or bear out the view which he has formed of the character of some remarkable individual. M. de Lamartine promises that, after a while, in case any of his statements should be assailed, he will support them by a mass of proof. We would impress on him that this is a duty, which, even without any call of self-defence, it is incumbent on him to discharge, in order to stamp on the very face of his history those outward and visible signs of conscientious and laborious truthfulness, which can alone invest it with permanent utility and reputation.

But accuracy, unfortunately, is not one of M. de Lamartine's qualifications for writing history. Those who are most conversant with the events of the Revolution accuse him of frequent exaggeration. Imitating a habit of the ancient historians, which is not permitted by the present canons of historical propriety, he does not scruple to embody his own conception of the feelings of the various personages of his narrative in imaginary speeches, which he puts into their mouths. In some instances an ordinary acquaintance with the history of the Revolution exposes inaccuracies which are not to be attributed to any bias or misconception, but to sheer carelessness. But even with these very serious defects, this work remains a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Revolution. Imperfect as a history, it is a striking and instructive historical study. It brings before us that most stirring and important period with a clearness and vividness that all previous descriptions, except some of Carlyle's, have failed to realise: it presents us on the same page with distinct, highly-finished sketches of the principal actors, and with a careful and deliberate judgment on the causes, the nature, and consequences of the events. These are the objects at which the

author has evidently aimed; and he has, in our opinion, attained them with greater success than any other writer on the Revolution. Skill and power in the representation of remarkable scenes and incidents was an excellence which M. de Lamartine's descriptive powers gave us reason to anticipate: and, he has combined this excellence with more discrimination and justice in his estimate of characters and events than we were prepared for. Though occasionally too apt to judge one man somewhat too harshly, or to elevate another into a species of imaginary hero—though often bewildered by the vastness of the subject, or misled by his own ardent temperament—M. de Lamartine seems to us on the whole to have brought to the consideration of the Revolution a more candid spirit and more wholesome sympathies, than any preceding writer. It is a great and rare merit in a Frenchman writing on that subject in the present day, to be able on the one hand to appreciate the grandeur and justice of the Revolution without silencing the suggestions of human feeling and the simple dictates of morality: and on the other to give full scope to pity and justice towards individuals without allowing those sentiments to abate the ardour of his sympathy with that succession of efforts by which, at an immense cost of personal suffering and wrong, the safety and happiness of a great people were secured.

The period comprised in these eight volumes is the most eventful period of the Revolution. The author selected an incorrect designation when he called his work a '*History of the Girondins.*' The characters and fortunes of the particular body of men known by that appellation in no respect form the sole or even principal subject of the work. No especial pains are devoted to the elucidation of their policy and position. Instead of being brought into a more prominent position than that which they have occupied in previous histories, or being invested with any peculiar interest, they are thrown rather more into the background, and, if anything, deprived of their real importance and consideration. The existence of their party does not even mark the chronological limits of the work. The narrative commences before their rise, and is continued long after their disappearance. It might with much more propriety be called a *History of Robespierre* than of the Girondins; but it would most accurately be described as the '*History of the Rise of the French Republic.*' It comprises the period commencing with the establishment of the Constitution of 1791; continuing through the various occurrences that led to the downfall of that Constitution, the foundation of a Republic in its place, the struggles of factions in the Convention, the gradual consolidation of power in

the hands of the Committee of Public Safety ; and closing with the fall of Robespierre. After this begins the second period ; which may properly be designated as that of the Decline and Fall of the Republic.

The narrative of this period is prefaced by a review of the state of affairs at its commencement, and an account of some events which immediately preceded the adoption of the Constitution of 1791, and determined its fate, even before it came into being. The death of Mirabeau in the April of that year deprived France of the only statesman who possessed the capacity to guide his country through the Revolution, and enjoyed the amount of public confidence, which is an equally necessary condition for success. We cannot concur with M. de Lamartine, that the energies and utility of Mirabeau were exhausted : and that his efforts to give stability to the new institutions of his country must have failed. Whatever may be said of popular fickleness and of the ephemeral nature of revolutionary reputations, the first want of the public is a leader : And, when a man of Mirabeau's genius had actually been accepted by the people as its habitual leader, a moral power had been created which might, perhaps, have arrested or diverted even the movement of the French Revolution. His death left the Assembly in a state of disorganisation, which continued during the remaining months of its existence. Among the various subordinate orators to whom the removal of their chief gave a momentary superiority, the foremost place fell to the amiable and pure-minded Barnave, who, without any of the qualities of a statesman, possessed the merit of a clear and effective style of speaking.

‘ Still in the shade and in the rear of the leaders of the National Assembly, a man almost unknown began to bestir himself, moved by unquiet thoughts that seemed to forbid him silence and repose : on every occasion he tried to speak, and attacked every speaker indifferently, even Mirabeau. Hurling from the tribune, he mounted it again the next day : humbled by sarcasms, stifled by murmurs, disavowed by all parties, lost to sight amid the great athletes who fixed the public attention, he was ever beaten, never wearied. You might have said that some secret and prophetic genius revealed to him beforehand the vanity of all these talents, the omnipotence of will and patience, and that a voice heard by him alone whispered to him in his soul, “ These men who despise thee are thine ; all the windings of this Revolution, which does not choose to look at thee, will end in thee ; for thou art placed in thy path as the inevitable extreme in which every impulse ends.” That man was Robespierre.’

Nothing in Robespierre's exterior gave any indication of the superiority which he was destined to command ; there was nothing even to attract the attention of the observer. His ap-



pearance is described as that of a short, slight, ill-made man, with awkward and affected gestures, — a harsh, mouthing, monotonous tone of voice, — a small, rather handsome forehead, swelling out above the temples, as if pressed out by force of eager thought, — deep-set blue eyes, of a somewhat gentle but unsteady expression, half hidden under his eyelids, — a small nose and open nostrils, — a large mouth, with thin contracted lips, — and an unhealthy yellow complexion. The expression of his face was mild, with something of a serious calmness, and a sarcastic smile. But the predominant characteristic of his countenance was the constant eager tension of his features, as if all the energies of his whole soul and frame were always vehemently bent on some one object. And this was the fact. For, passionately devoted to the system of Rousseau, Robespierre had ever before him, from the outset to the end of his career, one constant purpose, — the resolution of realising the ideas of social and political change, which that daring speculator had shadowed forth. To this the ultimate limit of the Revolution, and of the then thoughts of men, he steadily looked, and steadily advanced without ever swerving, pausing, or faltering. His character was not of the kind that enabled him actively to propel the movement in any of its various stages: still, no step was taken in advance, but he was seen moving yet further onwards, and urging the public mind to some more distant point. At the period of which we now speak, he was only beginning to be of importance. He and Petion, another disciple of the ‘Contrat Social,’ an unsuccessful lawyer, but vigorous, sincere, and of a handsome exterior, and fitted to play the part of a popular leader, were at the head of a small group of extreme politicians: though without influence in the Assembly, they were already in possession of considerable strength from their credit with the Jacobins and the mob.

The flight of the Royal Family to Varennes followed the death of Mirabeau, and was probably occasioned, or at any rate accelerated by it. The various details of this interesting story are narrated with exciting circumstantiality: and the attention of the reader is not unwisely riveted on an incident second in importance to none of the strange events by which it is surrounded. The flight to Varennes exercised the most direct and serious influence on the subsequent course of the Revolution. The attempt, its failure, and the mistaken course adopted with respect to it by the Assembly, were fatal alike to constitutional monarchy, and to the peaceful establishment of republican institutions. As regarded the King personally, the whole transaction was justly destructive of all further trust in him. How

far the precariousness of the position, in which his family were placed, excuses the step on private grounds, it is unnecessary to inquire. These were not points which the people of France could appreciate. They saw the King, in the midst of professions of attachment to the new order of things, suddenly quit his capital, and endeavour to place himself at the head of that portion of his army which was least well-affected to the Revolution, and in the position in which he could most easily avail himself of the support of the foreign powers and emigrants. In all this they naturally saw proofs of his irreconcilable repugnance to the changes which were taking place, and a readiness to resist them, even at the cost of civil war and foreign intervention. Thenceforth the avenues to public confidence were closed on him: and he became by inevitable consequence incapable of retaining to any useful end the position of a constitutional monarch.

Happy had it been for both King and people, had the former accomplished his purpose, and succeeded in reaching the camp of Bouillé. The spirit of the French army at that period negatives the supposition that the King could have detached any considerable portion of it from the national cause, or maintained his ground in any part of France. He would have been compelled to quit his dominions; and when once a fugitive, the forfeiture of his crown would have been admitted by all the world to be a matter of obvious necessity; the Duke of Brunswick's army, instead of deriving strength from his presence, would have had in his weakness merely an additional element of confusion in councils, not very vigorous at their best; while the new executive government of France would have been relieved from all trammels and all suspicions. The jealousies and conflicts of the following year would, in this case, have had no existence. The populace would never have been unloosed and organised for successful revolt. At any rate, its barbarous vengeance would not have been infuriated by the blood of royal victims, and France would have been spared all the disgrace and all the disorder that flowed from the fountain of that useless crime.

Unfortunately, the adverse fates — the unlucky blunders of the Duc de Choiseul, and the perverse acuteness and energy of Drouot, frustrated these desirable results. All might have been well if the royal carriage had completed two more stages in security. Indeed the Constituent Assembly, had it then been equal to the crisis, would have deliberately secured the results which had been missed by chance. Instead of bringing back the King to Paris, and disguising the real character of his flight,

by pretending to consider it as an *abduction*, they should have preferred the fiction, which was consecrated by the example of the English Revolution on the absconding of James the Second—they should have treated the flight as an *abdication*—compelled the royal family to leave the country—and proceeded to provide for the vacancy of the throne. They might, as M. de Lamartine thinks they should have done, have established the Republic at once:—

‘The Republic, had it then been legally established by the Assembly acting in the exercise of its rights, and in full possession of power, would have been quite other than the Republic which nine months afterwards was the perfidious and atrocious conquest of the insurrection of the 10th of August. It would have been exposed, no doubt, to the agitation inseparable from the birth of a new order of things. It would not have escaped the disasters natural to a country in its first movements, when frenzied by the very magnitude of its dangers. But it would have been the child of law, instead of sedition: of right, instead of violence; of deliberation instead of insurrection. This alone would have changed the untoward conditions of its existence and its future. It must have been stirring; but it might have remained pure.

‘See what an entire change would have been made by the one fact of its having been legally and deliberately proclaimed. There would have been no 10th of August: the fraud and tyranny of the commune of Paris, the massacre of the guards, the attack on the palace, the king’s flight to the Assembly, the outrages with which he was there loaded, and lastly, his imprisonment in the Temple, would all have been avoided. The Republic would not have killed a king, a queen, an innocent child, and a virtuous princess. It would have had no massacres of September, that St. Bartholomew of the people, which for ever stains the robe of liberty. It would not have been baptized with the blood of 300,000 victims. It would not have placed the people’s axe in the hands of a revolutionary tribunal, to be used by it to immolate an entire generation in order to make room for an idea. The Girondins, coming pure into power, would have had much more strength to combat the demagogues. The Republic, calmly established, would have awed Europe in a very different manner from a riot, authorised by murder and assassination. War might have been avoided; or, if inevitable, would have been more unanimous and triumphant. Our generals would not have been massacred by their soldiers amid cries of treachery. The popular spirit would everywhere have fought on our side, and the horror excited by our days of August, September, and January, would not have repelled from our standards the nations attracted to them by our doctrines: and thus would a single change in the origin of the Republic have changed the fate of the Revolution.’ (Vol. i. p. 320.)

Undoubtedly, if the experiment of a republic were a matter of necessity, it would have been far better that it should have

been tried under the circumstances desired by M. de Lamartine. But it seems to us that the Assembly, by boldly declaring the throne vacant on the occasion of the King's flight to Varennes, might have given the Constitution of 1791 a fair chance of stability. If the young dauphin had been placed on the throne, the popular leaders might have wielded the executive power under the name of a regency, and have gradually fashioned the monarchy to work harmoniously under the new constitution. Or, the crown might have been transferred to the younger branch of the royal family; and in this case the undoubted popular sympathies of the Duke of Orleans would probably have rendered his exercise of the constitutional powers of the monarchy endurable to the people, because compatible with the maintenance of the changes effected by the Revolution.

Which of these courses would have commanded the public assent can now only be matter of speculation. We agree with M. de Lamartine, that the course taken by the Assembly was the very worst of all that lay before it. To confer the royal prerogative on a king who had just declared, by his words and acts, his entire alienation from his people, and his disaffection to free institutions, was simply to render monarchy and the new constitution impossible. The step, though dictated by some surviving respect and regard for Louis, was, in truth, the most cruel act that could have been done towards him. 'It crowned him,' says our author, 'with suspicion and insult—it nailed him to the throne, and made that throne the instrument of his torture, and finally of his death.' On the other hand, at this period the King might yet have saved himself. 'On his return from Varennes, he should have abdicated. The Revolution would have adopted his son, and brought him up in its own likeness. He did not abdicate—he submitted to receive a pardon from his people—he swore to execute a constitution from which he had run away—he was a pardoned king. Europe looked on him thenceforth only as a fugitive from the throne brought back to his punishment,—the nation as a traitor,—and the Revolution as a puppet.'

Brought back a prisoner, amid the execrations of his people, the King, after some weeks of confinement in his palace, and an entire abeyance of his prerogatives, was restored to liberty, in order to enable him to give a free assent to the Constitution. He gave that assent, figured in the ceremony of the inauguration, swore to the Constitution, and was immediately placed in the unrestricted exercise of all the powers it vested in him. Under these circumstances, the Constituent Assembly separated; and the Legislative Assembly, composed of an entirely

fresh set of men, utterly inexperienced in public affairs, entered, in conjunction with this incapable, discredited, and alienated king, on the management of affairs, and the government of France.

Among the new characters who now appeared on the political stage, there was one particular body of men, which had been preceded by a great, though vague reputation, for ability. These were the deputies of the Department of the Gironde, chiefly young lawyers from the City of Bordeaux, which its commercial wealth, the legal body attached to its parliament, and the influence of its successive eminent writers, had combined to render the centre of considerable refinement, intelligence, and activity. On arriving at Paris, they naturally formed the acquaintance of other deputies of similar opinions, and were eagerly sought out by the public men who aspired to consideration. Buzot, Petion, Brissot, and other ardent advocates of republican doctrines, already constituted a circle, which three or four times in every week collected round Roland and his distinguished wife. To this society the deputies of the Gironde attached themselves; and similarity of opinions and social communication speedily formed out of these materials the nucleus of a political party, to which the eminence of these deputies gave the name of Girondins. Of this party Brissot was the statesman who directed its general policy; while Petion, who had now attained the influential office of Mayor of Paris, was its man of action and practical experience.

M. de Lamartine has evidently no great opinion of Brissot, whom he describes as a needy literary adventurer, who had not passed quite unsoiled through the necessities and intrigues of his early life. But, the vague imputations, which are thus cast on the integrity of Brissot, are repelled by the respect which was felt for him by the purest of his party, and which Madame Roland expresses in her memoirs as the result of an intimate knowledge of him; and by the steadiness and honesty of his conduct throughout the period during which it was most exposed to the public eye. He was well-informed, industrious, and bold. Nevertheless, though a respectable member, he was a very weak head of a party. His views were confused, his system ill-considered and incomplete, his conduct singularly unskilful, and the influence which he undoubtedly possessed in his party was one of the first and surest presages and causes of its ill-success.

Another striking member of the new party was Fauchet, the constitutional Bishop of Calvados. M. de Lamartine is eloquent in his description of the true and generous character and commanding aspect of the Republican, who, in his zeal for his political

creed, never swerved from his Christian faith. Isnard, one of the deputies of Provence, was one of the most brilliant of the orators of the new assembly, and certainly one of the least wise. 'He had ever in his mind the ideal of a Gracchus: he had the courage of one in his heart, and the tone in his voice. Still very young, his eloquence boiled like his blood: his speech was the fire of passion, coloured by the imagination of the South: his words burst out like quick throbbings of impatience. He was the ardour of the Revolution personified. The Assembly followed him out of breath, and reached his excitement before it arrived at his conclusions. His speeches were magnificent odes, which elevated discussion into poetry, and enthusiasm into convulsion; his gestures belonged rather to the tripod than the tribune: he was the Danton, as Vergniaud was the Mirabeau, of the Gironde.' (Vol. i. p. 271.)

The famous triumvirate of the Gironde, as they were called, were three young advocates who had been elected deputies of Bordeaux. The least conspicuous and effective, as an orator, was Gensonné, to whose calm, just frame of mind, and patient industry, his party were in the habit of confiding the task of drawing up reports and similar documents. 'An unbending logic, a bitter and cutting irony, were the two characteristics of Gensonné's talents.' A far more effective speaker was Guadet, who, at a very early age, had acquired a high position in his profession. His vehement eloquence carried away the Assembly; of all his party he was the most dreaded by the Court and the Mountain. But the renown of these competitors was at once eclipsed by the indisputable superiority of Vergniaud, whom the unanimous opinion of his contemporaries recognised as the most brilliant of all the orators of the Revolution. In this respect the admiration of those who belonged to his party is supported by the opinion of Madame de Staël, a most competent judge, whose political opinions were adverse to the Girondins, and is justified by the reports of his speeches that have reached us.

'Obscure, unknown, modest, without any presentiment of his own greatness, he lodged with three of his colleagues from the South in a little lodging of the Rue des Jeuneurs, and afterwards in a retired house in a suburb surrounded by the gardens of Tivoli. His letters to his family are filled with the humblest details of domestic management. He can scarcely contrive to live. He watches his least expenses with a strict economy. A few louis, which he has asked of his sister, appear a sum sufficient to support him a long time. He writes to have a little linen sent him in the cheapest manner. He never thinks of fortune, not even of glory. He goes to the post to which duty calls him. In his patriotic simplicity, he is terrified by

the mission which Bordeaux imposes on him. An antique probity breaks forth in the confidential *épanchements* of this correspondence with his friends. His family have some claims to press on the ministers: he refuses to ask anything for them, for fear that asking justice should appear in his mouth to be extorting a favour. "I have tied myself down in this respect to the utmost nicety; I have made myself a law," he says to his brother-in-law M. Alluaud of Limoges, who had been a second father to him.

'All these private communications between Vergniaud, his sister, and his brother-in-law, breathe simplicity, tenderness of heart, and home. The roots of the public man spring out of a soil of pure morality. No trace of factious feeling, of republican fanaticism, of hatred to the King, discover themselves in the innermost feelings of Vergniaud. He speaks of the Queen with tenderness, of Louis XVI. with pity. "The equivocal conduct of the King," he writes in June, 1792, "increases our danger and his own. They assure me that he comes to-day to the Assembly. If he does not pronounce himself in a decisive manner he is bringing himself to some sad catastrophe. Many an effort will have to be made to plunge in oblivion so many false steps, which are looked on as so many treasons." And a little further, descending from his pity for the King to his own domestic situation, "I have no money," he writes, "my old creditors in Paris dun me; I pay them a little every month: rents are high: it is impossible for me to pay for every thing." 'This young man, who with a gesture crushed a throne, scarce knew where to lay his head in the empire which he was shaking.'

He had been brought up at a Jesuit college, at the expense of Turgot, who was then Intendant of the Limousin; had been intended for the church, from which he shrunk at the last moment, and went to Bordeaux to study the law, at the expense of his brother-in-law and the president Dupaty, who became his zealous patron. His early efforts were crowned with success.

'Scarcely has he made a little by his profession, when he strips himself of it, and sells the little inheritance which he had got from his mother, to pay the debts of his late father. By the sacrifice of all he possesses he redeems his father's memory: he arrives in Paris almost in indigence. Boyer-Fonfrède and Ducos of Bordeaux, his two friends, receive him as a guest at their table, and under their roof. Vergniaud, careless of success, like all men who feel their own power, worked little, and trusted to the moment and to nature. His genius, unfortunately too fond of indolence, loved to slumber and give itself up to the carelessness of his age and disposition. It was necessary to shake him in order to waken him out of his youthful love of ease, and push him to the tribune or into council. With him, as with the Orientals, there was no transition between idleness and heroism. Action hurried him away, but soon wearied him. He fell back into a reverie of genius.

'Brisot, Guadet, Gensonné, dragged him to Madame Roland's. She did not find him manly or ambitious enough for her taste.

His Southern habits, his literary tastes, his attraction towards a less imperious beauty, continually brought him back into the society of an actress of the Theatre-Français, Madame Simon Candeille. He had written for her, under another name, some scenes of the drama then in vogue, of "La Belle Fermière." This young woman, at once a poetess, writer, actress, displayed in this drama all the fascinations of her feelings, her talent, and her beauty. Vergniaud intoxicated himself with this life of art, of music, of declamation, and of pleasure: he was eager to enjoy his youth, as if he had a foreboding that it would soon be cut short. His habits were meditative and idle. He rose in the middle of the day: wrote little, and on loose sheets, with his paper on his knee, like a man in a hurry who makes the most of his time: he composed his speeches slowly in his reveries, and kept them in his memory by the help of notes: he polished his eloquence at leisure, as the soldier polishes his weapon when at rest. He wished his blows to be not only mortal, but brilliant: he was as curious about their merits in point of art, as of their political efficiency. The stone launched, he left the recoil to fate, and gave himself up anew to indolence. He was not the man for every hour: he was a man for great days.'

Vergniaud was of middle size, and of a strong and vigorous make; his lips were somewhat thick, his eyes black and flashing; his forehead broad and open; and his long brown hair waved, like that of Mirabeau, with the motions of his head. His complexion was pale, and his face marked with the small-pox. 'In a state of repose no one would have noticed this man in the crowd. He would have passed with the common herd, without offending or arresting the gaze. But when his soul beamed forth in his features like light on a bust, his countenance as a whole gained by its expression that ideal splendour and beauty which none of his features had in detail. His eloquence lit him up. The throbbing muscles of his eyebrows, temples, and lips shaped themselves according to the thought that was in him, and made his countenance the thought itself: it was the transfiguration of genius. The time of Vergniaud was when he spoke: the pedestal of his beauty was the tribune. When he had come down it vanished: the orator was no more than a mere man.' (Vol. iii. pp. 21—25.)

The picture of the party would be incomplete without that of the beautiful, high-minded, and accomplished woman, who was the social centre of the party, who inspired its most generous resolutions, who was its noblest martyr, whose pen has made it known and honoured, and whose life and writings are the truest type of the state of mind in which the party had its origin. We shall not extract any portion of M. de Lamartine's narrative of a life, which the Memoirs of Mde. Roland



have made familiar to every reader. We think that in some respects M. de Lamartine does her less than justice. He appears to have some disposition to attribute her republican vehemence to recollections of the mortifications which she had experienced, when insulted by aristocratic condescension, or contemplating from the attic, in which she visited her friend, the splendour of the Court of Versailles. The tone of Madame Roland's writings does not justify this harsh suspicion. She had the opinions and passions of her times: and with the ardour of her character and her sex exaggerated her republican hopes, and her resentment against the imaginary crimes of kings.

Such were the leading persons in the party of the Girondins, — a party destined to play a brief and brilliant part in the drama of the Revolution, to exhibit much of its greatness, to be involved in many of its most grievous errors, and in some of its crimes, to perish by an unjust death, and to suffer after death from the injustice of posterity. The modern historians of the Revolution, under the influence of a kind of superstitious veneration for its energy and vastness, have had a tendency more or less openly to extol those of the actors in it, who seem to have most entered into its spirit and propelled its progress, and who followed its course to its ultimate development with the most unfaltering constancy. The purity of the motives which actuated the Girondins in their struggle against anarchy, their generous sacrifice of power and life to the cause of their country and humanity, are acknowledged and praised, but at the expense of their intellect and vigour: their unsuccessful efforts are treated as indicating feebleness of will and shallowness of thought; and we are taught to look on them with no less contempt than pity, as a host of declaimers, who were found wholly wanting in capacity to deal with the realities of political life. The general impression produced by M. de Lamartine's history is not at all calculated to raise the Girondins from this unjust depression. For unjust we must consider it. That they failed in the great endeavour to guide the Revolution, that they failed through great and culpable mistakes, their story clearly proves. They have no pretension to belong to that higher class of statesmen, who can comprehend the mind of a people when in a state of revolutionary ferment, can foresee the tendency of ideas and the course of events, and can by their wisdom and energy direct the great movement of mankind to the desired end. The crisis with which they had to deal was too vast for them. But we must not from that conclude, that they were puny men. Rare among the sons of men is the capacity that would have succeeded where they failed! They possessed in a high degree the qualities which

give eminence and influence in free governments — an eloquence never surpassed, a soundness and largeness of views, which experience would have gradually ripened into statesman-like ability, and the courage, probity, and generosity, that, by commanding respect, and inspiring confidence, raise men to be the leaders of their fellow-citizens. Though not gifted with such energy and genius as could bear them safely through the terrible crisis in which they were placed, we may confidently say, that few men in modern times have exhibited a fairer promise of the qualities which, in the ordinary course of settled government, best fit their possessors for the safe and useful conduct of affairs.

The misfortune of the Girondins was, that, when they arrived in Paris, and suddenly found themselves the leading men in the legislature, which was to conduct twenty-five millions of men through a Revolution, the science of politics was practically unknown to them. What books could teach they had learned; but the institutions of their country had excluded them from all acquaintance with public business; and it unfortunately happened, that hardly one of them had, by his previous occupations, acquired any knowledge of the art of managing men. They shared that general indignation against the abuses of the old system of things which pervaded the whole heart of France; their minds, like those of most of their generation, were fraught with an enthusiastic reverence for the great men, and institutions of the ancient republics; and they hoped so to direct the course of government and legislation, as, either under the newly established Constitution, or under openly republican forms, to secure to their countrymen the imagined blessings of democracy. They found no leaders to whom they could attach themselves. The prominent men of the late Assembly had almost disappeared from public life; nor were either Barnave or Lafayette, who were recognised as the founders and principal supporters of the new Constitution, competent to mould and inspire a party. The Girondins were left to their own guidance. New to public life, they had to bring new institutions into safe and steady operation, in a society torn to pieces by the violence of the changes already effected, and by the passions which the convulsion had excited.

M. de Lamartine thinks that the original error of the Girondins was in not at once proclaiming the Republic on the meeting of the Legislative Assembly. It is only as the next best course to that, that he thinks they should have made a more determined and sincere effort to uphold the Constitution of 1791. The course suggested by M. de Lamartine would have been in-

finitely preferable to that actually taken by the Girondins. But we think that their first duty was, to make every effort to maintain the Constitution which they found established; and that their great error was, in ever resorting to insurrectionary force to effect the subversion of the institutions to which the nation had given its assent.

For we cannot think that the Constitution of 1791 was so utterly impracticable, but that prudence and vigour might have upheld it for some little time until the public mind should cool, and the amendments, which experience might prove necessary could be calmly and safely applied. A single Chamber passing laws by a single vote, under the influence of any momentary influence, was not calculated to continue for any length of time the legislative institution of a great and civilised nation. While it lasted, it must have been turbulent and democratic; but, the instant collision into which it was brought with the royal authority, recognised by the Constitution, might, it would seem, have been avoided, had the right use of the prerogatives vested in the Crown been understood and enforced. M. de Lamartine thinks rightly that the direct cause of difficulty in the Constitution of 1791, lay not in the want of power in the Crown, but in the King's possessing an amount of authority incompatible with the other provisions of the Constitution. The legal independence of the other branches of the legislature, which is secured to the Executive by the letter of the British Constitution, would, if asserted in fact, be fatal to the stability of any mixed form of government. Since the establishment of parliamentary government in England, its compatibility with an hereditary monarchy has been maintained by the recognition of the principle, that the ministers of the Executive must always be taken from the party possessing the actual parliamentary majority. The power of the Crown is really upheld, not by its legal authority of counteracting, but by all the influences which enable it to modify, the will of parliament. Of that will, resulting from the conflict of all the various influences that determine its character, the executive government is and must be the passive instrument. The democratic elements of the Constitution of 1791 would have allowed the Crown to exercise but little influence in the legislature; and the executive authority would necessarily have been the instrument of a very democratic government. But it would have been better that such should be the case than that anarchy should be inevitably produced by the conflict between the two independent wills of the Executive and the Legislature.

The powers which the Constitution of 1791 vested in the

King were quite sufficient to prove formidable obstacles to the power of the legislature. He possessed a suspensive *veto* on all its acts, which, in the emergencies of a revolution and a war, was quite as effectual as a more complete authority. He was entrusted with the uncontrolled nomination of all the ministers, and of every officer of the civil and military service of the kingdom. He enjoyed a civil list of a million sterling, of which the disposal rested wholly in his pleasure. It was impossible that a free people and a sovereign legislature could long leave such powers in hostile, or even suspected hands. The only chance for the maintenance of the royal authority lay in placing it entirely at the disposal of the nation. The King should at once have waived the independent exercise of prerogatives, which he could not exert in opposition to the national will, without the downfall of the whole system. He should have taken the ministers pointed out by the dominant party in the Assembly; abstained, in conformity with the invariable practice of the English Constitution, from exercising the *veto* placed in his hands; and laid the accounts of his civil list before the Assembly. The just judgment of mankind would have relieved him of all moral responsibility, for the formal acts done in pursuance of a deliberate renunciation of powers, which could not be freely exercised without compromising the public tranquillity. The whole present, as well as future, responsibility of government and legislation, would have been thrown on the Assembly; and the executive authority, avowedly the prize of the conflict, and the instrument of the successful party, would have been removed beyond the possibility of collision with the people. Free from reproach for all the ills that might result from the mistakes or violence of factions, the King might have preserved the existence of the monarchy; and when all parties had ultimately weakened and discredited each other, or any one of them had succeeded in establishing itself in power, might, in either event, have availed himself of the exhaustion of the nation, or of the restoration of order, to re-assert the rights and consolidate the power of the Crown.

Unfortunately, the disposition of the Court induced the deposed monarch rather to avail himself of any fragment left him out of the wreck of his former authority, than, by wise concessions, to prepare for a future recovery of the whole. The picture which M. de Lamartine gives of the character, and his narrative of the conduct of this unhappy prince, leave such an impression of his extraordinary weakness, that, fearful as were the necessary perils of the Revolution, we cannot but feel that their fatal result was mainly to be ascribed

to the incapacity of Louis. Meaning well, without a thought of vengeance or triumph, and sincerely desirous of the public good, his mere weakness produced the appearance, and even the actual effect, of the worst designs, and the deepest perfidy. With no notion of the state of affairs — no conception of the course which he ought to adopt — he depended entirely on the suggestions of others. He took every body's advice: the worst parasites, the most open opponents, were in turn resorted to by him. Unable to discriminate between good and bad counsels, he followed one man's advice to-day, and held language in conformity with it; and the next day took the directly opposite course, and used language which gave a character of falsehood to the words which he had uttered the day before. No one could trust, no one could fix, and, consequently, no one could effectually guide or serve him. Among all those who principally directed him, there was not, as M. de Lamartine says, one man who could understand, much less one who was capable of resisting, the Revolution. He was chiefly under the influence of the Queen; and he could hardly have been under worse. M. de Lamartine's pity for the sufferings of Marie Antoinette — his admiration of her beauty and courage, do not blind him to her faults. She had the tact that could conciliate individuals, and the intrepidity which bore her nobly through personal emergencies; but she had none of the political knowledge or genius — none of the patient courage, which would have enabled her to give a wise direction to the feeble mind of her husband. Personal resentments and predilections for ever outweighed the dictates of policy; and the vehemence and quickness of her impulses rendered her energy as fickle as the King's weakness.

'Measures of vigour, corruption of the Assembly, sincere adoption of the Constitution, attempts at resistance, an attitude of royal dignity, repentance, weakness, terror, and flight, all were conceived, tried, prepared, determined upon, abandoned the same day. Women, so sublime in their self-devotion, are rarely capable of the steadiness of purpose and the coolness necessary to a plan of policy. Their policy is in their heart; their feelings act too closely on their reason. Of all the royal virtues, they have none but courage: they rise often to heroes, never to statesmen. The Queen was an additional example of this. She did the King much mischief: gifted with more ability, more soul, more character, her superiority served only to inspire him with confidence in fatal counsels. She was at once the charm of his misfortunes, and the genius of his ruin. She led him step by step to the scaffold, but she mounted it with him.'

Every act of the Court during the year that passed between

the acceptance of the Constitution and the 10th of August, 1792, aided and precipitated the catastrophe. It is not too much to say, that they formed one long treason against the Constitution to which the King had sworn. Throughout, the King had two ministries, the one avowed and responsible to the nation; the other consisting of such men as Calonne and the Baron de Breteuil, who were organising, under the King's auspices, the invasion of France by the emigrants and foreign powers, and thus fomenting the two main causes of the destruction of the monarchy. The emigration was the master evil; it stripped France of the very class, whose presence in their own country would have been the most effectual support to the throne. A small portion even of the 20,000 emigrants, whom our author states to have been at one time in arms on the frontier, might have baffled any of the decisive movements of the Revolution. The course pursued by the emigrants, coupled with the hostile preparations of the foreign powers, excited to the utmost pitch the alarm and anger of the French people. The Court, though their safety depended on the removal of all causes of excitement, could not abstain from encouraging the invaders. They did it unsteadily, it is true. A favourable vote, or any mark of confidence on the part of the Assembly, or any demonstration of popular favour, would at any time raise the King's hopes, and make him write off to his agents at Coblenz to discontinue their hostile preparations. The next day came some encroachment by the Assembly, or some insult from the mob around his palace, and he had no hope but in the success of the invasion. His acts too constantly justified the suspicions of the people. The ministers of his choice were enemies of the Revolution; and those whom the popular feeling for awhile forced on him, were speedily dismissed from his councils. The strong measures to which the Assembly had recourse for what we cannot but regard as justifiable purposes of self-defence, were obstructed by his unwise exercise of his *veto*. His large revenue was undoubtedly applied to purposes inconsistent with good faith and the public interest; and the mystery in which the expenditure of the civil list was kept, of course led to suspicions which went far beyond the truth.

It would, no doubt, have been a task of great difficulty for the leaders of a popular party to uphold the Constitution in despite of the public excitement, and of the impulse given to it by the suicidal conduct of the Court. But the Girondins cannot be relieved from the charge of having aggravated the intrinsic difficulties of the state of affairs by their own errors. They commenced the session of the Assembly by petty encroachments

on the royal dignity, which lowered the authority, and irritated the feelings of the King. They then committed the far graver fault of encouraging the warlike feeling of the country, and of forcing on the war with Austria, which prudence might have averted, or, at any rate, postponed. To avoid or postpone it was the obvious interest, not merely of their party, but of their principles. They looked, however, only to their immediate object—the coercion of the Court; and by bringing on a war for that purpose, they swelled and prolonged an excitement, which was sure to frustrate all their ulterior schemes of tranquil government. The bright period of Robespierre's history is that of his determined opposition to this war. His popularity, and his exertions in the Jacobin Club, for a month counterbalanced the public feeling, the efforts of the Girondins, and the violence of the popular agitators. It was in the long and angry discussion of this subject, that he was for the first time brought into violent collision with the Girondins, especially with Brissot; and it is a remarkable proof of his extraordinary ability, that while asserting the unpopular cause, he greatly augmented his own popularity, and weakened that of his rivals, who were lending themselves to the passions of the people.

But the capital error of the Girondins was their rupture with Dumouriez. The only chance of maintaining the Constitution lay in strengthening a popular minister, and enabling him to keep the executive in harmony with the Assembly. Narbonne was the first of the ministers of Louis who thought of establishing his ministry on the confidence of the Assembly. His ill-success resulted not so much from his own acts, as from his inability to disarm the suspicions excited against him by his aristocratic birth, and from the unpopularity of the party to which he was supposed to owe his elevation. Unsupported by the Assembly, he was dismissed by the King, who, in his turn, distrusted him on account of his popular professions. Dumouriez sought to attain the same object as Narbonne, under more favourable circumstances, and with far greater qualifications. Elevated to office by the influence of the Girondins, he had the sagacity to take the only course that would have enabled them to consolidate their power; and their misfortune was, that in the man whom they had taken as an instrument, they did not discern, or would not recognise the qualities that they wanted in a leader.

Dumouriez had described the true policy to be pursued by the King, in a phrase which he used a short time before his accession to office. 'If I were king of France, I would baffle all these parties by putting myself at the head of the Revolution.' And on this principle he acted for a time most success-

fully, winning the confidence of the King and Queen in spite of their strong prepossessions against him; humouring the Jacobins by going at once to their sittings, and, with the cap of liberty on his head, explaining to them the principles on which he intended to govern; taking, in all his measures, a strong popular and national line; executing his plans with energy and skill; and using his influence with the King and Queen to obtain the withdrawal of the *veto* from decrees which had passed the Assembly. No policy could have been better adapted to promote the interests of the Girondins, as well as those of the country. Personal differences seem to have occasioned the breach between them and Dumouriez. Madame Roland detected his ambition, and inspired suspicions of him, which Dumouriez unfortunately confirmed by manners and morality savouring so much of the old *régime* as to shock the republican puritanism of the Girondins. His commanding tone and superior abilities gave umbrage to his colleagues; while he, on the other hand, grew impatient of their narrow views and want of practical skill. In the vehement dissensions which at this time broke out between the Girondins and the yet more extreme section of the Revolutionists, he thought he saw the means of obtaining support for his policy in the event of a rupture with his old supporters. He accordingly entered into close communication with Danton, in whom he found a sagacity and vigour congenial to his own. Emboldened by the prospect of assistance from the Jacobins, he encouraged the King to dismiss the three Girondin ministers, Roland, Clavières, and Servan; and was prepared, by giving effect to a thoroughly popular policy, to defy the anger of the majority who supported the dismissed ministers. In this attempt he was baffled by the King's refusal to sanction the decree against the refractory priests, and resigned. With his retirement from office vanished the last hope of a popular ministry. The King was driven to take his ministers from the known opponents of the Revolution; and the Girondins, inflamed by personal mortification, and giving way to a boundless distrust of the Court, directed their attacks against the existence of the monarchy.

The dismissal of the Girondin ministers was followed, in a few days, by the outrages of the 20th June, 1792, the guilt of which principally rests with Petion. The momentary reaction which these outrages provoked, was neutralised by Lafayette's imprudent manifestation, and by the advance of the Allies on Paris. The Girondins and Jacobins suspended their disputes for a time, in order to unite against the refractory general and the invading enemy. The leaders of the Assembly threw off all disguise of attachment to the Constitution; and Vergniaud, in his memorable



speech on the 'Dangers of the Country,' openly broached the deposition of the King. The levy of troops to serve against the invading armies was made the pretext for filling Paris with a revolutionary force. Barbaroux brought up the Marseillais. On the other hand, the Court prepared their means of defence. The excitement grew, as the two parties found themselves face to face. The popular fury broke forth into multiplied and ferocious outrages on the real or supposed adherents of the Court. Suddenly the insane proclamation signed by the Duke of Brunswick, as general of the invading army, made its appearance in Paris. Not a moment was to be lost in taking the powers of government out of the hands of a Court who were, in reality, counting every stage of the Prussian march as a day nearer to their deliverance. The insurrection of the 10th of August took place. The Court had considerable means of resistance at their disposal; but by a succession of mistakes and mischances they allowed the well-directed resources of the mob to obtain an easy triumph. The King left his palace, and the monarchy was abolished.

Of all these remarkable incidents M. de Lamartine has given graphic and stirring descriptions. The wild elements of the insurrectionary force of Paris are brought before our eyes. We have the various picturesque biographies of Santerre, Saint-Hurugue, Theroigne de Mericourt, and the other strange leaders of that terrible host. It was in a lone house at Charenton that all these movements were planned. There the details of the 10th of August were concerted on the night of the arrival of the Marseillais, amid the terrors of a memorable thunder-storm. The electric fluid was everywhere attracted by the crosses which occupied the highest pinnacles, or stood isolated on the roadsides; and the next morning the ground in the neighbourhood of Paris was found ominously strewn with the prostrated emblems of religion.

Of the 10th of August itself we have a very minute narrative. The first sketch is taken from an account given by Lucile, the young wife of Camille Desmoulins, who describes the evening and night of the 9th, and morning of the 10th, which she passed at Danton's house, in company with his wife. Here we have the insurrection as it came home to the families of those who had conspired the movement: the reckless excitement produced by the anticipation; the fears that gradually thickened as the reality began to exhibit itself, and armed hands began to pass; as, one by one, friend and husband armed himself to take part in the fray, and as the appalling clang of the tocsin surmounted the din; the night of agony watched through by the women, crouching, listening, and wailing, until they fainted at the sound

of the cannon. Danton alone is calm: after having set the whole in motion, he leaves its details to take their chance in the hands of the subordinate but more immediate agents, and goes quietly to bed.

Then we are taken through the same awful night as it was passed by the Royal Family in the Tuileries, with the dreaded morning breaking on them amid the first notes of assault and the preparations for defence. The King makes his appearance, worn and haggard, with his dress disordered, and his manner exhibiting the confusion, not of fear, but of shyness. The Queen preserves her haughty air, and intrepid spirit; which is only broken by the fruitlessness of her efforts to inspire her husband with the energy required by the crisis. She sees him commence his review of the troops; her hopes rise with the shouts of 'Vive le Roi!' raised by the gentlemen who fill the palace, and by the loyal battalions in the courts; they are dashed when the King, instead of assuming the bearing and uttering the few bold words that would have stimulated his defenders, stammers forth one or two disjointed purposeless phrases, which only communicate to others his own irresolution; and they are finally extinguished as she sees him return amid hisses from his luckless circuit of the gardens, while band after band of the National Guards march over and range themselves with the assailants. We accompany the family in their mournful passage to the Assembly, and during the mortal agony of those sixteen hours passed in the narrow heated box of the *logographe*. The King eats, drinks, and chats with the deputies: the Queen sits silent, exhausted, vanquished; her countenance flushed with the mortification of defeat, but still lit up with unyielding pride and resentment. The cannon sounds close: the Swiss are said to be victorious: the deputies swear to die at their posts. This hope, too, passes away: the victorious mob enters to announce its triumph, and parade its trophies. The royal captives are doomed to sit through the long debate in which they hear their fate discussed, and their downfall decided; and are then finally dismissed to prison. We give but a faint outline of the startling picture drawn by M. de Lamartine: the reader who would receive the full impression of its effect must read the work itself.

The Girondins, when they had triumphed over the Monarchy, seemed at first scared by their own success. They scrupled at once to proclaim the Republic: and not only left the responsibility of doing so to a Convention to be immediately summoned, but excited in the meantime the distrust of the victorious people by votes, which seemed to indicate an intention of maintaining the

institution of royalty. The dismissed ministers were replaced in office—the real power, however, was at once engrossed by Danton; who now stood forward for the first time in a prominent position, as Minister of Justice, and immediately asserted his incontestable superiority over his colleagues. In truth, he wielded the whole executive authority, because he had organised it, and called it into action. When the Girondins, after the 10th of August, found that the result of their efforts had been to make Danton and the Commune rulers over them, they were taught too late how grievously they had erred, with respect to the course which they had pursued for the subversion of the Monarchy. They had originally assailed that institution, in the vain imagination that a government might be pulled down and built up again by the mere power, with which oratory sways an assembly and excites a people. They understood nothing of the process, by which the popular force was to be organised and directed; and when they at last determined on an insurrection, they had recourse to Danton and the Commune to furnish its means. The insurrection over, the means remained at the disposal of those who had created them. The Commune, led by Danton, Marat, and Robespierre, and embodied in the force which had been organised under Santerre, governed Paris, and, through Paris, France. Happy had it been for the Girondins, had this lesson taught them, that, before they could hope to establish an orderly republic, in place of the monarchy which they had destroyed, they must themselves, not only re-construct the machinery of executive government, but provide, and keep in their own hands, the physical means by which its existence was to be maintained, and its authority enforced. Unfortunately, to the end of their career, they seemed to conceive that they were administering an established government, instead of working out a revolution; and that the votes of an assembly were the end, and speeches the means of governing. Too late they learned on the scaffold that the controversies in which they had engaged, were only to be settled by ‘pike and gun.’

The reign of the Commune, between the 10th of August and the meeting of the Convention, derives a horrible celebrity from the massacres of September. M. de Lamartine has been at some pains to collect various proofs of the deliberation, with which the details of this horrible butchery were concerted. He condemns Marat as having instigated, Danton as having sanctioned, and the Commune as having perpetrated it. Excuses which have been offered for it, he rejects with scorn.

‘History,’ he says, ‘should represent the conscience of mankind. The voice of that conscience will ever condemn Danton. It has been

said that he saved his country and the Revolution by these measures, and that our victories are their excuse. This is the error into which he fell. A people that has need to intoxicate itself with blood in order to impel it to defend its country, must be a people of scoundrels and not a people of heroes. Heroism is the very reverse of assassination. As for our Revolution, its *prestige* was in its justice and its morality. This massacre went to tarnish it in the eyes of Europe. Europe, it is true, did raise a cry of horror: but horror is not respect. A cause is never served by being dishonoured.'

And he compares the effect of this massacre on the character of the Revolution to that of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew on the cause of the Church of Rome. Sound policy, as well as the moral sense of mankind, confirm this judgment. The measures originally proposed by Danton for seizing the persons of those who were well known to be disaffected to the Revolution, might be justified by the necessities of the crisis. The commander of a besieged city is authorised to deprive those whom he knows to be plotting against the public safety, of the power of doing harm; and the situation of Paris, expecting the Prussians at its gates, might be sufficient warrant for the imprisonment even of thousands of suspected conspirators. But the cold-blooded slaughter of disarmed prisoners was an act of useless as well as revolting cruelty. The genius of Dumouriez had already saved France. The bloody licence given to the assassins only heightened into frenzy the passions of the populace. It maddened them to fresh acts of violence, and deterred all men of justice and moderation from taking any further part in connection with persons who had made such crimes a part of their policy. The guilt recoiled on Danton and the Revolution. It for ever separated him from the party, by whose support he might have governed France: and it was found to have paralysed his arm, when the time came in which he wished to put a stop to violence, and restore the rule of humanity and reason.

A curious anecdote is given by M. de Lamartine, on the authority of a surviving friend of Robespierre and St. Just, whose name unfortunately is kept back. We could wish to be able to estimate the degree of foundation for a story which casts a singular light on the strange character of Robespierre. At the period of the massacre he was a member of the Commune; but, seeing the turn affairs were taking, had for some days foreborne to attend its meetings. He had no share in what was done; had no power of preventing it. As in the case of preceding movements, he did nothing, blamed what was being done, but let it go on; and when done, took it as a necessary step in the Revolution, and defended it.

‘ On the 2d of September, at eleven o’clock at night, Robespierre and St. Just went out together from the Jacobins, exhausted by the mental and bodily fatigue of an entire day passed in tumultuous debates, and big with so terrible a night. St. Just lived in a small lodging in the Rue Ste. Anne, not far from the house of the joiner Duplay, where Robespierre resided. Talking over the events of the day, and what was threatened for the morrow, the two friends reached the door of St. Just’s house. Robespierre, absorbed in his own thoughts, went up to the young man’s room in order to continue the conversation. St. Just flung his clothes on a chair, and prepared to go to sleep. “What are you doing?” said Robespierre. “I am going to bed,” answered St. Just. “What! can you think of sleeping on such a night?” replied Robespierre. “Do you not hear the tocsin? Do you not know that this night will probably be the last for thousands of our fellow-creatures, who are men at the moment you go to sleep, and will be corpses when you wake?”

St. Just answered with one of the commonplaces of the day, and went to sleep. Early the next morning when he woke, he saw Robespierre pacing up and down the room, and every now and then pressing his face close to the window to watch the daybreak, and listen to the sounds in the street. St. Just asked him what brought him back so early, and found to his astonishment that he had not left the spot all night.

“Sleep!” said Robespierre; “what! while hundreds of assassins were cutting the throats of thousands of victims, and while blood, whether pure or impure, was running like water in the gutter! O no,” he continued, in a deep voice and with a sarcastic smile on his lips, “I have not been to bed, but have watched, like remorse or crime: ay, I have been guilty of the weakness of not sleeping; but Danton, he has slept!”

The instigators of the 10th of August cannot be acquitted of having called into activity that spirit which produced the massacres of September. But we must not deny to the Girondins the honour due to them. As soon as they recovered from the first stupor into which this gigantic crime threw all France, they raised their voice in loud and uncompromising denunciation of it. Roland, while the carnage was going on, exhausted whatever means he could command to stop it; but both he and Petion were utterly powerless. In proclamations, in letters, and in protests, Roland, at the imminent peril of his life, continued his war with the Commune. Indignant at the enormity of the crime itself, at the discredit cast by it on the Republic, and at the predominance given to both the most anarchical doctrines and the most worthless men, the Girondins now perceived the necessity of checking the progress of disorder. From being the leaders of the movement, and the instigators of insurrection,

they came in a few weeks to be regarded by the populace as the counter-revolutionary party, against whom the next efforts of the friends of the Revolution must be directed. From this time the hopes of every friend of order and humanity rested on them as the party who would put an end to the turmoil and carnage of the Revolution.

The aspect of affairs at the first meeting of the Convention on the 20th of September, 1792, was most favourable to the Girondins. Though the elections of Paris, taking place in the very days that followed the massacre, had returned a deputation entirely composed of Jacobins, the representatives of the Departments had been elected under very different feelings. The unanimous choice of Pétion as president showed the disposition of the Convention; and the Girondin leaders found themselves at the head of a large and determined majority. Had they been statesmen as well as orators, that majority and the public opinion of France gave them the means of establishing their power. But they entered the Assembly, smarting with mortification at their recent subjection to the Commune; and their first thought, was how they should use their majority to throw off that ignominious yoke. Instead of waiting until they had consolidated an efficient executive, they rushed into the contest, unprovided with any means of combating the physical force of their antagonists. They endeavoured at once to bear them down by the weight of public feeling. Nor did they confine themselves to the legitimate weapons with which a good cause furnished them. There were reasons against breaking at once with Danton. They saw in Robespierre their most formidable antagonist, and were probably stimulated by vindictive recollections of their bitter conflicts at the Jacobin Club. They accordingly directed the main force of their attacks against the one public man who had hitherto, less than any other, participated in any of the disorders of the Revolution. On the strength of some frantic declamations of Marat, whom they endeavoured most unfairly to associate with him, and of the foolish talk of some insignificant demagogues, they gravely accused Robespierre of aspiring to establish a dictatorship. Such was the substance of the charges brought against him by Barbaroux and Louvet. The accusation gave him an opportunity of vindicating himself, and of humbling his opponents in one of the most skilful and triumphant of his speeches. These ill-judged attacks imparted to the proceedings of the Girondins a character of petty and malignant rivalry, subjected them to the mortification of defeat in a personal conflict, and

weakened their hold on the majority by justly diminishing its confidence in their discretion.

But the trial of the King soon gave a more serious occupation to the contending parties. Actuated by that mistaken notion of equity which in like circumstances brought Charles I. to the block, the voice of the people demanded, as a matter of equal justice, that the deposed monarch should be subjected to the same fate as the laws of treason would infallibly have inflicted on his opponents, had he been successful in the contest. None of the leading men of either party, according to M. de Lamartine, shared this feeling, or desired the death of Louis; yet each consented, each exhibited a rivalry of eagerness to sacrifice the victim, in order to retain its hold over the people. The Girondins therein undoubtedly sinned the most deeply against their own principles and policy. But the conduct of the leaders of that party has been too hastily ascribed to mere cowardice. They did not, in truth, so much abandon their own views, as they made an ill-judged attempt to gain their object by indirect means. When the point came to be discussed in their councils, they found that they were opposed by some of the principal men of their own party—by Fonfrède, Ducos, Barbaroux, and Buzot, whose republican fanaticism required the death of the King. Imagining that, without their support, they would be unable to save the King's life, they adopted a plan of action suggested by Sicyes. They agreed to vote for his death, but to subject the decree of the Convention to ratification by the primary assemblies. The plan, supported by a plausible conformity with democratic principles, was obviously impracticable. It involved the prolonged agitation of a perilous question. It laid the Girondins open to the imputation of wishing to create dissension between the different parts of France. The people regarded it as a trick. The votes of the Gironde decided the judgment of death, which their influence, boldly exerted, would, in all human probability, have averted. And that judgment once pronounced, the expedient, by which its execution was to have been stayed, was unhesitatingly rejected.

The speeches of Robespierre contain the simple and forcible exposition of the grounds on which the execution of Louis is defensible as an act, not of justice, but of state policy. 'Louis must die because the country must live.' The noble reply of Vergniaud was contradicted by his vote. M. de Lamartine temperately examines the arguments on both sides, and his conclusions will not be new to any Englishman whom the earlier precedent in our own history shall have ever driven upon a similar re-hearing.

'Exhausted and discredited by four years of unequal struggle with the nation, twenty times placed at the mercy of his people, without credit with the soldiery, with a character of which the timidity and indecision had been repeatedly proved, fallen from humiliation into humiliation, and step by step from the height of his throne into a prison, Louis XVI. was the only prince of his race to whom it was impossible ever again to dream of reigning. Abroad he was discredited by his concessions: at home he would have been the patient and inoffensive hostage of the Republic, the ornament of its triumphs, the living proof of its magnanimity. His death, on the contrary, alienated from the French cause that immense portion of every people which judge human events only through the heart. Human nature is merciful. The Republic forgot that it gave to royalty a character of martyrdom, and to liberty that of vengeance. It thus prepared a re-action against the republican cause, and arrayed on the side of royalty the sensibility, the interest, the tears of a portion of every people. Who can deny that pity for the fate of Louis XVI. and his family, had a great part in the revival of royalty some years after? Unsuccessful causes have returns of favour of which the motives are often to be found only in the blood of the victims cruelly sacrificed by the opposite party. Public feeling, when once moved by a sense of its injustice, is only set at rest when it is, so to speak, absolved by some signal and unexpected reparation. The blood of Louis XVI. was in every treaty which the Powers of Europe contracted for the purpose of branding and stifling the Republic: the blood of Louis XVI. was in the oil which consecrated Napoleon so short a time after all the vows of liberty: the blood of Louis XVI. was in the monarchical enthusiasm which the return of the Bourbons at the Restoration revived in France: it mingled, even in 1830, in that repugnance to the name of Republic which threw the undecided nation into the arms of another dynasty. It is republicans who should most deplore this blood, for it is their cause that it has stained, and it is that blood which has cost them the republic.'

The details of this catastrophe afford ample scope for the descriptive powers of M. de Lamartine. It is much to the credit of his moral judgment, that he has not sought to heighten the effect by investing the sufferers with unreal virtues. The mournful tale of the imprisonment in the Temple, with all its anguish and all the tortures inflicted by the vulgar insolence of the gaolers—the picture of the King, carried along to his trial, pale, unshaved, with his clothes hanging loosely on his attenuated frame—and the last agonies of his separation from his family, sensibly touch our pity. We admire the calm resignation, and the unfailing gentleness which characterised his whole demeanour through these scenes of suffering, and dictated the Will which emanated from the solitude of his own thoughts. But the impartial narrative lowers our previous conception of the dignity of the monarch's deportment. His feeble capacity suggested



to him the expedients by which an ordinary prisoner endeavours to evade his condemnation, instead of the passive superiority with which a martyr receives his doom; and we cannot help recalling the stately silence with which Charles I. rebuked his judges on the like occasion.

A momentary lull followed the catastrophe: and then the deadly war of the two contending factions broke forth afresh. During the first months of 1793, the Girondins assailed the Commune, and endeavoured to discredit the Mountain by continuing to associate them with the frantic ebullitions of Marat, and by reviving the charges of dictatorial designs against Robespierre. The Mountain retorted with accusations of counter-revolutionary projects and federalism. The Girondins, favoured by the Plain, possessed a large, and it must be said, a steady majority in the Convention. Even in Paris they commanded the support of the middle classes. Their party occupied all the most important offices in the ministry. The successes of Dumouriez gave glory to their administration of the government; and they relied on the co-operation of his army against their antagonists. Roland had funds at his disposal to keep the newspapers in pay, and circulate the views of his party throughout France. To this party the great majority of the departments adhered most warmly. A little skill in organising the force of the executive government, and patience until they should have got together the means of acting with effect, would apparently have insured them an easy and certain triumph. Danton, anxious to clear himself from the guilt of September, and to erect a strong and respectable government, was ready to become the ally of the Girondins, and bring to their aid his sagacity, his courage, and the vast popular force which he wielded. Vergniaud, and other leaders of the party, appreciated the value of his aid, and the wisdom of temporising with their opponents. Their wisdom was overruled. The younger members of the party, inflamed by the counsels of Madame Roland, would allow of no truce with the advocates of anarchy and massacre. Marat was again assailed; the people of Paris took the part of that furious organ of their passions and prejudices; and the Mountain defended the favourite of the people. By degrees the leaders were involved in the fray; and Robespierre renewing his accusations against the Girondins, exasperated the people against them.

But the Girondins, while thus provoking the conflict, made no preparation for bringing it to a successful issue. They allowed their friends to be successively driven from the chief offices of government, and to be replaced by men indifferent or opposed

to them, at the same time that all the lower offices in every department were filled with creatures of the Jacobins. They even permitted the various bodies of *fédérés*, who formed a military force on which they could rely, to be sent out of Paris, until they were left without any means of repressing the mob. While they exhausted the time and patience of the Convention in personal recriminations, Danton was suffered to dictate the policy of the Republic. When the insurrection of La Vendée broke out, the majority began to follow the only leader who seemed to have matured the measures that were required by the crisis; and, in spite of the opposition of the Girondins, at his suggestion the Convention created the revolutionary tribunal, and voted the first laws against the *aristocrates*, and for taxing the rich in order to arm the people.

In the meantime the *Commune* were noways disposed to resign their power to the Girondins, or leave that party leisure to consolidate a force which might control them. On the 10th of March an insurrectionary movement was attempted with the double object of intimidating the Convention, and of murdering the principal Girondins at their own houses. Timely information enabled the menaced deputies to frustrate the last object; and the energy of the minister Beurnonville, with a force of *fédérés* from Brest, awed the assailants. Danton, who alone could organise a decisive popular rising, kept aloof, and, indeed, protected the Girondins. •

This uncertainty, however, could not long last, in face of the increasing dangers of the Republic. The troubles of La Vendée grew more serious. The French army was defeated and driven out of Belgium; and in the first days of April the public terror rose to its height on intelligence of the defection of Dumouriez. The contending parties sought to cast on each other the odium of connexion with the traitor. The Girondins, Lasource and Biroteau, seized the first occasion of making a detailed charge against Danton, as an accomplice of his treason. Enraged and alarmed at a charge to which his intimate relations with Dumouriez gave some countenance, Danton saw the necessity of throwing himself at once into the arms of the Mountain. He assailed the Girondins with the customary accusations of counter-revolutionary projects, and with furious gestures declared, that from that moment there should be no peace or truce between himself and those who had wished to save the King. He at once placed himself at the head of their assailants, and set about combining the means by which their power might be destroyed.

For six or seven weeks a conflict was kept up between the

powerless Assembly and the minority, which was backed by the physical force of Paris. The Girondins, in order to compose an efficient executive within the Convention itself, constituted the famous Committee of Public Safety. They put Marat on his trial before the revolutionary tribunal, where his acquittal gave their enemies a signal and, indeed, fearful triumph. They then struck directly at their principal adversary, and established a Commission of Twelve to examine into the proceedings of the Commune of Paris. That body, thus assailed, lost no time in taking their resolution. The various sections of Paris appeared before the Convention with petitions demanding the abrogation of the Commission and the arrest and accusation of the twenty-two principal deputies of the Girondin party. Tumult and menaces followed. On the interposition of Danton, who wished to avert the last extremities, the Commission was annulled by a vote of the Convention. The next day Lanjuinais, who displayed, in defence of his party, the same intrepidity which he had shown in endeavouring to save the life of the King, carried a motion to rescind this vote. The mob could be no longer restrained — they declared themselves in a state of permanent insurrection. On the 31st of May they surrounded and entered the Convention. The Girondins protesting against this coercion, quitted their seats; their places were occupied by the mob; and the Commission was again annulled. But the excited populace now required vengeance as well as submission. The cry for the accusation of the Twenty-two was again raised. On the morning of the 2d of June the Convention was surrounded by the armed force of the sections under the command of Henriot; and a hundred pieces of artillery were pointed against the chamber which it occupied in the palace of the Tuileries. Some of the proscribed deputies had already sought safety in flight; others, with Vergniaud at their head, calmly proceeded through the threatening mob to brave the fate which was denounced against them. The Committee of Public Safety endeavoured to effect a compromise by inducing the Twenty-two to resign their seats in the Convention. Some did so; others stoutly refused. The menaces of the armed mob increased in violence. As a last expedient to save their colleagues, the Convention, with the president at their head, proceeded in a body to make their way out of the Tuileries. Henriot refused to allow them to pass until they had given up the Twenty-two. At every point they found their passage barred by the insurgent forces; and at length they returned to their chamber, and passed a decree ordering the provisional arrest of the principal leaders of the Girondins.

So closed the political existence of a party which, for nearly two years, had occupied the most conspicuous position in the legislature of their country. Misplaced in a revolution which they were not capable of conducting, they became the victims of those ferocious passions which, after exciting, they had failed in coercing, and with which they scorned to enter into any compromise. A civil war, which at the outset menaced the existence of the Republic, was for some weeks kept alive in Normandy and other parts of France by such members of the party as had escaped from Paris. A majority of the departments joined their cause, and prepared to resist the usurped authority of the Mountain. All of every denomination who were hostile to those in power, crowded under the banner raised by the Girondins. The natural consequence of this was, that the Royalists, who had long been secretly preparing for resistance, and who possessed leaders of military experience, became everywhere the real masters of the movement, and turned it to their own purposes. No sooner was this apparent, than the insurgents lost confidence in one another. The insurrection subsided as instantaneously as it had broken out, except at one or two points, where it was avowedly continued as a Royalist rebellion. In the course of a few weeks the Committee of Public Safety had almost everywhere re-established its authority; and the only resource, which was left the baffled Girondins, was disguise and flight.

These insurrectionary attempts had fearfully excited the passions of the populace and Convention against those of the Girondin leaders who were in their power; and the assassination of Marat sealed their doom. The early history of Charlotte Corday (whom M. de Lamartine states to have been a descendant of the great Corneille), and all the details of her memorable act and heroic death are carefully narrated. Only one moment of compunction came over her — it was on witnessing the grief of Marat's mistress. She had not conceived it possible that, in destroying a monster, she could be wounding the affections of any human being. Our author gives a striking picture of her as she was conveyed to the scaffold, clothed in the red shirt which was reserved for murderers, and inspiring even the ferocious mob with admiration for her beauty and simple courage. Vergniaud, when he heard the details of her fate, exclaimed, 'She kills us, but she teaches us how to die.'

From this period commences the Reign of Terror. The perilous condition of society which followed the 31st of May, 1793, had produced a general sense of the necessity of a vigorous executive; and the Committee of Public Safety, taking

advantage of the opportunity, succeeded in obtaining complete possession of the administration of affairs. Supported by a disciplined force, under the name of the 'Revolutionary Army,' it had in its hands the means of crushing opposition and enforcing obedience. For the first time since the meeting of the States General, France possessed a strong government. To suppress rebellion, repel the foreign foe, and terrify the internal enemies of the Republic, was the first business of that government. For this last purpose the Revolutionary Tribunal was re-organised, and armed with the terrible 'Loi des Suspects.'

The first sufferer was, perhaps, the one whose fate most revolts us by its injustice—the unfortunate Custine, whose military reverses drew on him the penalty of treason. A nobler victim followed. On the 14th of October the unhappy queen was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Her intrepid protest against the foul charges with which Fouquier garnished his list of calumnies, for one moment rallied the feelings of the audience on her side; but could not avert a doom which was meant to be the penalty both of her former greatness and of her recent hostility to the Revolution. She was conveyed to her fate in an open cart, amid the execrations of the mob, and the savage jests of the infuriated women, whose trade it was to insult the dying. The jolting of the rough vehicle disordered her dress, and added to her sufferings by diminishing the air of personal dignity, which she strove to preserve. Her haughty countenance evinced the mortification and anger which filled her soul; and she died exhibiting to the last her hatred and scorn for her butchers. But the touching narrative does not disparage the justice of its historian. After moving our sympathy by her wrongs, he remains master of himself, and calmly proceeds to review the life and condemn the errors of Marie Antoinette.

The Girondin leaders, who, in conformity with the decree of the second of June, had been watched rather than confined in their own houses, and had refused to avail themselves of many opportunities of flight, had, as the public became exasperated by the proceedings of their adherents, been transferred to the prisons. Seventy-three of the less important deputies of the party were also *décrotés*, lodged in prison, but saved from death by the energetic protection of Robespierre. M. de Lamartine, who endeavours, somewhat at the expense of historical truth, to represent Robespierre as having endeavoured to save the Queen (for, he had been the first publicly to demand her trial within a few weeks of that of the King), is supported by more authority, when he attributes to him the wish to save the Girondin leaders from the scaffold. Danton undoubtedly had that

object at heart. Both were powerless to resist the rage of their party and the populace. On the 26th of October the trial of the twenty-two Girondins began. Among them were Brissot, Gensonné, Fauchet, Sillery, and several of the most eminent deputies of the party. All eyes, however, were turned on the last who entered the hall. It was Vergniaud, or rather the wreck of that great orator, whose voice had subverted the Monarchy, and disputed the mastery with Robespierre and Danton. His imprisonment had impressed a livid paleness on his cheek, deprived his eye of its fire, and given his person an unhealthy corpulence. He wore the dress in which the spectators recollected to have seen him habitually dressed in the Convention; but the coat, too small for his swollen limbs, had burst in the seams, and completed the picture of physical as well as political decay. Neither eloquence nor innocence could avail with judges, who regarded the whole public life of the accused as one crime. But the government took care to allow no room for either pity or justice. A decree closed the proceedings, without permitting the prisoners to make their defence. They were declared guilty, and sentenced to death.

The famous supper which the prisoners took together that night is minutely described; and M. de Lamartine has apparently converted this part of his history into a romance, for the purpose of clothing in his own eloquent language the sentiments said to have been expressed on that occasion. Then follows the well-known story of the death of the Girondins, as they went to the scaffold, and successively ascended it, singing the 'Marseillaise' in chorus, till the knife had extinguished the last voice that raised the hymn of liberty.

The at once heroic and truly womanly death of Madame Roland followed in a few days. The news of her death reached Roland in Normandy, and was the signal for his own fate. He left the retreat in which he had found safety, and laying himself down by the roadside put an end to himself. Condorcet was concealed by some generous friends in Paris until the following April. There, with his illusions unabated, he composed his work on the 'Perfectibility of the Human Race.' A bright sunny day proved too irresistible a temptation to the captive: he quitted his hiding-place, sallied out into the suburbs, and enjoyed once more the air, and sunshine, and fields. His appearance gave rise to suspicions: he was arrested, and found next morning dead, with the phial of poison which he had swallowed still by his side.

A detailed account is given of the escape of Guadet, Salles, Louvet, Barbaroux, Buzot, and Pétion, after the rout of the

Girondin forces in Normandy: Having, amid fearful perils and sufferings, reached Brest, they got a passage to the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, where the friends of Guadet provided them with shelter. Eight months were passed by them, at first in an under-ground vault, and subsequently in the house of a courageous lady. The search for them being then renewed, they separated. Guadet and Salles were taken in the house of the former's father, carried to Bordeaux, and executed. Louvet was saved by his boldness in taking refuge in Paris itself. The others lingered about their former asylum for some weeks, and then endeavoured to make their way to the Pyrenees. Some peasants in a field heard the sound of a pistol, and found the half-dead body of the once handsome Barbaroux. A few days after, in a forest at a little distance, were found some mangled limbs, which the wolves had half devoured, and which the clothes and papers discovered with them showed to be the remains of Buzot and Pétion. M. de Lamartine has omitted the date of their death, not the least painful circumstance connected with it. That date was in July 1794, only about three weeks before the fall of Robespierre. Had they contrived to baffle their pursuers for that brief period, they would have been saved.

We have thus followed M. de Lamartine through his narrative: endeavouring to convey to our readers, the story as he tells it, of the period of the Revolution which coincides with that of the existence of the party which forms the ostensible subject of his work. This important epoch occupies altogether six of the eight volumes of M. de Lamartine's history: we regret that the length of our review of it precludes our following him through the remaining two, which continue the narrative to the fall of Robespierre, and are, perhaps, the most interesting portion of the work. The different scenes of the Reign of Terror are successively delineated with wonderful power. The mass of bloodshed and misery,—the batches of from 60 to as many as 150 victims that each day fed the guillotine at Paris,—the courageous resistance of Lyons, and the atrocious butcheries which followed its subjugation,—the cruelties of Lebon at Arras, and the yet more appalling atrocities perpetrated by Carrier at Nantes, are placed vividly before our eyes. Sometimes our attention is directed to the characteristic particulars that distinguished the death of the more remarkable individuals. Now it is Barnave who passes along dejected amid the pity of the people, of whom he was once the idol: now Biron, rising from his wine and oysters to die gaily amid the applauses of the mob: now the wretched Du Barri, screaming 'La vie! La vie! pour tous mes repentirs: ' now Bailly perishing

with undaunted soul in defiance of the outrages and blows of vindictive ruffians: now the venerable Malesherbes laying down his life with not unseemly gaiety: now the saintly sister of the King exercising her charity towards her fellow-sufferers in her last moments. We sicken at the prodigality with which the life of whole classes is taken away at once. One day, the *cortège* bears along twenty-seven merchants of Sedan: on another, the sixty farmers-general of the revenue: and on another, forty-five magistrates of Paris, together with thirty-three members of the parliament of Toulouse. One morning a long line of carts conveys all the nuns, young and old, of the Abbey of Montmartre. On another are seen a group of girls, of whom the eldest was not above eighteen. They had all been brought up from their native town of Verdun to die for having danced at a ball given to the Prussians.

The most harrowing tale of all is, the destruction of the whole family of the beautiful Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe. In the last days of terror, this family was sacrificed by the colleagues of Robespierre, in order to wound him by their destruction. They were involved in a pretended plot with Cecile Renault, who was accused of attempting to murder him. Eight carts bore to the scaffold sixty-two prisoners, all clad in the red shirt that denoted the crime of murder. Of this number were the porter of the house where L'Admiral had stabbed Collot d'Herbois, and the porter's wife: the crime alleged against them being that they were 'both guilty of not having broken out into sufficient joy when the assassin was arrested.' The last of this group was M. de Sartines, who had to wait three quarters of an hour on the scaffold, and see all whom he loved on earth butchered before his eyes.

A very touching narrative is given of the long sufferings of a man, whose name will excite no feelings of sympathy—Egalité, once Duke of Orleans. M. de Lamartine has taken some pains to defend this unhappy prince against the accusations, with which his memory is loaded. It has been his hard fate to be taken for the hidden contriver of all those popular movements, which the imagination of the vulgar loves to attribute to some mysterious plotter. The more light that history throws on the events of the Revolution, the more are all of them accounted for by obvious and sufficient causes; and the more insignificant does the part of the Duke of Orleans appear. He was the victim of constant disfavour and suspicion; and much of his hostility to the Royal Family is to be ascribed rather to their fault than his. His chief, if not only, crime was, the base rather than cruel vote



which he gave for the King's death, in the vain hope of saving his own life.

A singular anecdote is told of the Duc de Chartres, now the King of the French, which can hardly have been published without the warranty of that high personage. Some business having brought him from Dumouriez's army to Paris soon after the massacres of September, Danton sent for him, and informed him that he had heard that he ventured in conversation to speak too freely on that subject. He told him he was too young to judge of such matters, and added: 'For the future be silent. Return to the army; do your duty; but do not unnecessarily expose your life. You have many years before you. France is not suited for a Republic: it has the habits, the wants, and the weaknesses of a monarchy. After our storms, it will be brought back to that by its vices or its necessities. You will be King! Adieu, young man. Remember the prediction of Danton.'

The fall of Danton is clearly detailed and explained. Throughout the whole course of the history he stands out as (what M. de Lamartine calls him) the great statesman of the Revolution. He is the one who, in spite of his coarse manners, his profligacy, and even his terrible crimes, most powerfully excites our interest. M. de Lamartine, however, bears hard upon him in respect of his death. He treats all his memorable sayings and doings, during the period of his imprisonment and trial, as so much straining after theatrical effect. This is a grievous injustice to the most gallant and skilful fight for life made during the Revolution. Danton differed from the other victims of the Reign of Terror in this: that, even when within the grasp of the Revolutionary tribunal, his deeply-rooted influence with the mob gave him a chance of escape and victory. He had something else to do than merely to fall with dignity. He harangued, he bore down his judges by his loud voice and imperious gestures, with a view of exciting a movement in his favour. He was on the point of succeeding. A single friend to direct the actions of the sympathising populace—a little less energy than that exhibited by the Committee of Public Safety—would, by our author's own account, have turned the scale in his favour.

As we have said however, Robespierre is the hero of the work. His conduct and motives at every stage are developed with the greatest pains. The least details of his personal appearance, his dress, his daily habits, have been collected with extraordinary care. The ogre of the Revolution is brought before us in all the simplicity of his private life. We enter into his garret at the joiner Duplay's, and do homage to that honest

poverty which, once a necessity, continued to be his choice after the fortunes of France were at his disposal: we follow him from the stormy debates of the Jacobins or the fearful labours of the Committee of Public Safety to his modest supper with his host's family, when he talked with them of the events of the day, or read aloud from Rousseau or Racine. His only other relaxation was his walk on the Champs Elysées, with no companion but his mastiff, Brout. Occasionally, when an opportunity was afforded for a day's holiday, or when some great oratorical effort required unusual thought, he would wander forth to the haunts of Rousseau, and pass whole hours of reverie amid the woods of Meudon, or Ermenonville. Even he, too, had his hopes of domestic happiness in a quiet future, when, after the completion of the Revolution, he might be united to Eleonore Duplay, and pass the obscure remainder of his life on his few paternal acres in the neighbourhood of Arras.

It is impossible to rise from the perusal of M. de Lamartine's book without a somewhat changed opinion of Robespierre. There is no vindication of his acts. No attempt is made to mitigate our horror at the crimes of which he is reputed guilty; none to justify massacre on the plea of public necessity or righteous zeal. M. de Lamartine's aim is to analyse the motives that actuated Robespierre, as well as determine what was really his share in the atrocities which were perpetrated in his name. Perhaps he does this with some partiality. He has conceived an ideal framework of Robespierre's character, and fills it up by attributing to him particular acts or intentions of clemency, for which he has often little and sometimes no warranty. Still, on the whole, his explanation of this strange character is satisfactory. Historical truth, and a knowledge of human nature, gain by reducing the distorted and exaggerated traits of the monster into the features of a man actuated by the ordinary passions of humanity, gifted with many noble and even amiable qualities, and plunged into eternal infamy by common human weaknesses, tried in fearful times by most extraordinary emergencies.

In order completely to understand M. de Lamartine's estimate of Robespierre, it would be necessary to read his book; but the following passage, at the close of the fifth volume, seems to us to give the best summary of the author's views on a character which most of his readers will hitherto have seen painted only in the darkest colours: —

‘ There was something of these three elements in the soul of the Convention: a purpose which was true and practically attainable; chimeras, which vanished at the attempt to apply them; fits of rage,

which sought to extort by torture the realisation of an order of things not as yet in the nature of man. Holy hopes, vain Utopias, atrocious means,—such were the elements that composed the social politics of this assembly, placed between two civilisations to exterminate the one, and herald in the other. Robespierre personified these tendencies more than any of his colleagues. His plans, religious in their purpose, chimerical in their details, became sanguinary when they came in collision with practical impossibility. A frenzy of benevolence seized the Utopian; this frenzy of benevolence has the same effects as the frenzy of mischief. Robespierre held to his chimeras as to truths. Had he been more enlightened, he would have been more patient. His anger arose from his delusions. He wished to be the constructor of a social regeneration; society resisted: he took the sword and thought it was permitted to man to make himself the executioner of God. He communicated this spirit, half through fanaticism, half through terror, to the Jacobins, to the people, to the Convention. Hence this contrast of an assembly resting one hand on the revolutionary tribunal and the instrument of death, and with the other writing a constitution which recalled the pastoral Republics of Plato or “Telemachus,” and breathed in every page, God, the people, justice, and humanity. Never was so much blood shed on truth. The task of history is to wash out these stains, and not to reject social justice because a deluge of blood has been spilled over the doctrines of liberty, of charity, and of reason.’

The sincere fanaticism of Robespierre was the mainspring of his virtues, his greatness, and his crimes. One high, steady purpose, pursued at every risk, inspired his integrity, his perseverance, and his cruelty. He was at the head of a government assailed by enemies on every side; and he deemed it his duty to uphold that government by striking terror into his adversaries, and disarming opposition. Like all fanatics, he hated his opponents because he thought that the enemies of his righteous cause must be bad men. Still there was in the acts which he sanctioned a prodigality and brutality of cruelty needless for his purpose, fatal to his own views of policy, revolting to the sensitiveness and refinement of his character. We know that such was his own feeling, that he wished to stay the system of terror; that, during the worst period of it, he absented himself from the Committee of Public Safety, and was at direct variance with the ‘Comité de Sûreté Générale,’ and had no communication with the Public Accuser,—the two authorities by whom the trials and executions were, in fact, entirely regulated; that he denounced Tallien, Collot, Carrier, and especially Fouché, for their abominable cruelties, which he described as ‘persecutions of the patriots.’ We are the more perplexed to explain how it was that, with despotic power in

his hands, he permitted the horrors which he himself regarded as both mischievous and disgraceful.

The explanation seems to be, that he did not in truth possess the power which opinion ascribed to him. He could not in reality direct the government of which he was at the head. To understand his position we must examine the powers and defects of his mind. He was a logical and systematic thinker, whose system led him into a dreamy enthusiasm. His leading qualification for public life was a singular power of public speaking. In close, clear logic, in dexterous debating, he surpassed every speaker of his day: while in lofty eloquence, some of his speeches were hardly surpassed by the greatest of his rivals. But, like the Girondins, he could do no more than prove his point and make his speech. With the details of public affairs he was utterly unable to grapple. Thoroughly unpractical, he depended on others — first on Danton, afterwards on his colleagues in the Committee of Public Safety, — to determine by what steps their purposes should be carried into effect. Without being justly subject to the imputation of cowardice he was timid in action, or rather averse to act at all. Had the great movements of the Revolution waited for him to produce them, they would never have taken place. He shrunk from assailing the Monarchy after the adoption of the Constitution of 1791, and had no desire to see a Republic substituted for it. He kept aloof from the 10th of August, and the 31st of May. So, when at the head of the government, he had little share in the actual organisation of the heroic efforts that saved France. In all cases he left action to others. It was his good fortune that public opinion tended the same way as his, so that the result of its movement, in spite of his inaction, always furthered his purposes. His voyage prospered longer than that of most of his rivals, not from his own good sailing, but because his course happened to lie with the breeze. His ambition was of a patient kind. He loved the applause of his hearers; he took the power which came gradually to him; but he would not precipitate events by grasping it. In his last days the prospect of a Dictatorship did not tempt him. Even the necessities of self-defence could not induce him, on the 9th Thermidor, to ensure a favourable issue to the last movement in his favour, by putting himself at its head. His disposition was to look even then to any but violent means for safety and success; and he easily made up his mind to silent acquiescence in the fate of which a gloomy foreboding had long hung over him.

Such a man was, from his sincerity, his incorruptible character, his great parliamentary powers, the natural head of a republican government, but not its real director and master.

There can be little doubt that he wished to restrain the excesses of his colleagues; but he literally knew not how to set about it. He had not the virtue which was exhibited in the conduct and the favourite device of Vergniaud, — ‘*Potius mori quam fœdari.*’ He would not peril himself and his cause by inflexibly rejecting the use of atrocious means. He took the system of terror as part of the necessities of the Revolution; and closed his eyes and ears to its excesses just as he closed his shutters in the Rue St. Honoré, while the carts went by to the guillotine. When, at last, events required the cessation of that system,—when he had achieved the first of his dreams, proclaimed the ‘*Etre Suprême,*’ re-established religion as the basis of his Republic,—when he was hoping to lay the foundation of a peaceful order of things, he faltered before his better purposes, cast vainly about for the materials and instruments of action, and allowed himself to be surprised and butchered by the most vulgar and sanguinary ruffians of the Revolution. He paid the penalty of his weakness by his death, and in leaving his name loaded with execration, for guilt in which he had participated unwillingly, as well as for crimes which his own fanaticism had prompted.

In thus attempting to make our readers acquainted with the general effect and character of M. de Lamartine’s work, we have not ventured to give any extracts from those more striking parts of his narrative, which best exhibit the brilliancy and clearness of his descriptive style. The real merit of these large pictures cannot be estimated from particular portions of them; and as they are the parts of the original work, of which the effect depends the most on the author’s mastery of language, they are precisely those to which it is least possible for a translation to do justice. The pictorial power of the narrative constitutes the distinguishing merit of this history. M. de Lamartine has shown that he possesses in an eminent degree one, at least, of the first qualifications of a great historian, namely, the gift of stamping on the reader’s mind a living impression both of great transactions and of the men that bore a part in them. Far be it from us to derogate from the merits of those who, by extensive research and correct analysis, ascertain the facts of history and explain the connection of events. It is only by a long series of such inquiries and speculations that the materials of history are duly matured and brought together. But they are not the histories from which mankind takes its impressions of the past. He who would give the world its historical beliefs, must bring to the task the gifts of the poet as well as of the philosopher; must be able to depict incidents as in an epic, and make each

character appear and act with dramatic distinctness and effect. No historian of the Revolution has done this so strikingly as M. de Lamartine; and none, therefore, will in all probability exercise so extensive an influence on the popular views which will be generally entertained of it.

That influence, no question, will be very much diminished by the want, in M. de Lamartine, of other qualities which are required to complete the character of a historian. His work is wanting, not merely in accuracy and research, but in the indications of large, calm, and solid thought. While we think that the author does more than any preceding historian towards giving a reasonable explanation of the events of the Revolution, and while we generally agree in the justice of M. de Lamartine's conclusions and sympathise with his feelings; we feel that he does not express those conclusions in the tone of a philosopher, who has deeply meditated and thoroughly mastered his subject. His narrative exhibits constant marks of exaggeration. The subject, undoubtedly, has a tendency to produce this fault. All the moral phenomena of the Revolution were on a great scale, the vicissitudes unusually rapid, the results vast and overwhelming, the character of men so tried by circumstances as to develop extraordinary manifestations of intellect, of virtue, and of wickedness. But we cannot understand what heightening or transforming powers the Revolution could have possessed over female beauty: when we find, therefore, that hardly a woman appears on the scene, or is even mentioned as the wife or daughter of some distinguished man, but her beauty is represented as having been perfectly wonderful, we cannot but suspect that other pictures may be equally overcharged. The story of the daughters of M. Fernig, who served as soldiers in Dumouriez's army, bearing the fatigues, exposed to the perils, and sharing in the glories of the brilliant campaigns of Valmy and Jemappe, is romantic enough in its simplest outline: M. de Lamartine makes it absolutely ridiculous by investing the young ladies with the physical strength and prowess of Paladins. The same tendency to exaggeration is exhibited in every matter, in which numbers are in question. There is throughout too great a disposition to heighten the effect of the narrative by adopting the largest estimates hazarded by cotemporary writers; and our belief in the melancholy realities of the Revolution is shaken rather than confirmed, by somewhat incredible torrents of blood and heaps of carcasses.

We should be happy to think that what we have taken for indications of a want of sound and sober thought, may be only the consequence of the excessive rapidity, with which the 'History of the Girondins' has been written. It betokens, how-

ever, little wisdom in an author, who writes for fame and not for bread, to have composed a great work on a great subject without giving himself sufficient time for thought. Let us hope that M. de Lamartine will avoid this most deplorable fault in the 'History of the Constituent Assembly,' which he promises us. A gestation of nine years is more essential to a history than even to a poem. We know not whether M. de Lamartine has in him the capacity of being a great historian, but he has so many of the highest qualifications, that there will be few literary mistakes more deeply to be regretted than that he should be found to have sacrificed his chance of usefulness with posterity to the vanity of astonishing his contemporaries by the celerity of his execution and the brightness of his colours.

ART. II.—1. *The Irish Sketch-Book*. By Mr. M. A. TITMARSH. With numerous Engravings on Wood, drawn by the Author. In two volumes. Second edition. London, 1845.

2. *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo*, by way of Lisbon, Athens, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. Performed in the Steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company. By Mr. M. A. TITMARSH, Author of 'The Irish Sketch-Book,' &c. London, 1846.

3. *Vanity Fair: Pen and Pencil Sketches of English Society*. By W. M. THACKERAY, author of 'The Irish Sketch-Book,' 'Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo,' and 'Jeanes' 'Diary' and the 'Snob Papers' in *Punch*, &c. &c. (Nos. I.—XI.)—to be continued.

FAME, like wealth, is very unfairly and unequally distributed in this world. The remark, though hackneyed, ever and anon comes back upon us with a force and vividness affording, to our minds, unanswerable evidence of its truth. It has just been suggested to us anew, on observing within how small a circle the personal reputation of a highly influential writer may be confined, unless he puts forth a regular succession of quartos and octavos, and placards his real name on his title-pages. It may be right and natural that this should be so: anonymous writers have no reason to complain that their names are not familiar in men's mouths; and yet let us not be accused of an undue partiality towards the claims of our own calling when we say, that most of the great battles between truth and prejudice have been decided — most of the great steps in taste, criticism, correct feeling, and social improvement, have been

made,—not by ‘authors’ in the grand dignified sense of the word, but by periodical essayists, pamphleteers, reviewers, and the calumniated tribe who fall under the large and generic description of ‘gentlemen of the press.’ Yet invaluable as their services have been and are, these only arrive at celebrity in rare instances,—when their writings are collected towards the end of their career, or when the grave has closed upon them and some admiring friend is looking round for a monument. The political tracts of Swift and the moral essays of Addison have long taken rank among the classics of our tongue; but at the time of their publication men speculated upon them much as they now speculate on an article that attracts attention in a newspaper or a review; the authorship was by turns the subject of bold assertion, rash conjecture, and confidential communication; and it may be doubted whether even the inner circle were aware that the tracts and essays in question were forming a new epoch in literature.

The periodical writers and journalists of France have of late years enjoyed a degree of consideration more commensurate with their real influence and importance, but it is curious to see how French pamphleteers were regarded at no distant period. Paul Louis Courier, who probably had done more for the language than any ten of the existing forty, was rejected with scorn by the Academy, and prosecuted as a *vile pamphleteer* by the government.

“*Vile pamphleteer.*” This word raising against me the judges, the witnesses, the jury, the audience (my very advocate appeared shaken by it), this word decided all. I was condemned in the minds of these gentlemen from the moment that the king’s man had called me *pamphleteer*, to which I knew of no reply. For in my innermost soul it appeared to me that I had produced what is called a pamphlet; I dared not deny it. I was then a pamphleteer according to my own estimate, and seeing the horror which such a name inspired in the whole auditory, I stood confounded.’

Somewhat of the same horror is still inspired in the minds of a large class of English gentlemen by the bare mention of a newspaper writer; and we have known honourable and sensible men (at least, men commonly deemed sensible) act, and avow that they acted, differently from what they intended, because the line of conduct they really considered right had been too warmly advocated in the columns of a leading journal; imitating in this respect that sagacious animal the Irish pig, who, to manifest his perfect independence, makes a point of moving on all occasions in a diametrically opposite direction to the one indicated. When, therefore, we mention the late Mr.



Barnes and the gentleman who lately edited the *Examiner* as illustrations of our theory,—as men whose general reputation is very far below their real claims and merits, we shall be met probably with vehement protests from many quarters. Few or none, however, will deny that a wide-spread and lasting influence has been exercised through the pages of this review and those of our great Southern contemporary; yet it is only within the last five or six years, and after most of the contributors with whom we started had retired from the arena or sunk full of years and honours to the grave, that the public have become familiar with the names and individual performances of those by whom they had been so long guided, instructed, and amused.

Our honoured and lamented friend, the late Sydney Smith, was fond of telling in detail the story (mentioned in his published letter to Mr. Mackintosh) of his being mistaken at a dinner party at Sir James Mackintosh's for his gallant synonyme the hero of Acre; but we well remember the time,—long after he had become the delight of the most polished and intellectual circles of London and Edinburgh, when it was necessary, among the uninitiated or in the provinces, to preface the repetition of one of his *bons mots* by a sort of biographical notice, and as it were establish the existence of a Rev. Sydney Smith in contradistinction to the Admiral. Yet let any one, capable of estimating such matters, lay his hand upon his heart and declare whether any man living had done more to explode error, discredit bigotry, reform abuses, and diffuse intelligence.

That he has left no standard work of permanent interest and authority (for 'Peter Plymley' has fulfilled its vocation) is little to the point; for it is not by standard works that the results we speak of are best or most frequently brought about. In an unpublished letter from a distinguished prelate of the Irish church (which we are quite sure he will excuse our quoting) it is said: 'There is a large proportion of the public with whom repetition does more than anything else; who require to have an argument obtruded on their notice many times before they can be brought to attend to it, and made familiar to them before they fully comprehend it. It is only from the intelligent, candid, and attentive, that an error can be at once pulled up by the roots; with the generality, the process must be like that of the backwoodsman in extirpating trees, which he first fells, and then, year by year, pulls off the shoots as they spring up, till the stump dies and decays; after which he pulls it up.' The excellent writer in question performed this backwoodsman's service to admiration; and many a time within the last year or two, stunned or wearied by Currency nonsense and Maynooth

absurdity, have we exclaimed, 'Oh, for one hour of blind old 'Dandolo!' oh, for one hour of 'Peter Plymley,' with his searching clenching ridicule, and masculine good sense.

There is another mode in which periodical writers often benefit mankind, not only without having their services acknowledged, but without even being themselves aware of them. 'It is not always necessary (says Goethe) for truth to embody itself; enough if it float spiritually about and induce agreement, if, like the deep, friendly sound of a bell, it undulates through the air.' Full many a valuable truth has been sent undulating through the air by men who have lived and died unknown: at this moment the rising generation are supplied with the best part of their mental aliment by writers whose names are a dead letter to the mass; and among the most remarkable of these is Michael Angelo Titmarsh, alias William Makepeace Thackeray, author of 'The Irish Sketch Book,' of 'A Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo,' of 'Jeames' Diary,' of the 'Snob Papers' in 'Punch,' of 'Vanity Fair,' &c. &c.

Mr. Thackeray is now about thirty-seven years of age, of a good family, and originally intended for the bar. He kept seven or eight terms at Cambridge, but left the University, without taking a degree, with the view of becoming an artist; and we well remember, ten or twelve years ago, finding him day after day engaged in copying pictures in the Louvre in order to qualify himself for his intended profession. It may be doubted, however, whether any degree of assiduity would have enabled him to excel in the money-making branches, for his talent was altogether of the Hogarth kind, and was principally remarkable in the pen and ink sketches of character and situation which he dashed off for the amusement of his friends. At the end of two or three years of desultory application, he gave up the notion of becoming a painter and took to literature. He set up and edited with marked ability a weekly journal, on the plan of the 'Athenæum' and 'Literary Gazette,' but was unable to compete successfully with such long-established rivals. He then became a regular man of letters; that is, he wrote for respectable magazines and newspapers, until the attention attracted to his contributions in 'Fraser's Magazine' and 'Punch' emboldened him to start on his own account, and risk an independent publication.

These biographical details will be found highly useful in forming a just estimate of Mr. Thackeray's merits and capacity; for much that is most characteristic in his style of expression and mode of looking at things and people, may be traced directly to

his life, and to the peculiar society into which he has naturally and necessarily been thrown by it.

In forming our general estimate of this writer, we wish to be understood as referring principally, if not exclusively, to 'Vanity Fair' (a novel in monthly parts), though still unfinished; so immeasurably superior, in our opinion, is this to every other known production of his pen. The great charm of this work is its entire freedom from mannerism and affectation both in style and sentiment,—the confiding frankness with which the reader is addressed,—the thoroughbred carelessness with which the author permits the thoughts and feelings suggested by the situations to flow in their natural channel, as if conscious that nothing mean or unworthy, nothing requiring to be shaded, gilded, or dressed up in company attire, could fall from him. In a word, the book is the work of a gentleman, which is one great merit; and not the work of a fine (or would-be fine) gentleman, which is another. Then, again, he never exhausts, elaborates, or insists too much upon anything; he drops his finest remarks and happiest illustrations as Buckingham dropped his pearls, and leaves them to be picked up and appreciated as chance may bring a discriminating observer to the spot. His effects are uniformly the effects of sound wholesome legitimate art; and we need hardly add that we are never harrowed up with physical horrors of the Eugene Sue school in his writings, or that there are no melodramatic villains to be found in them. One touch of nature makes the whole world kin, and here are touches of nature by the dozen. His pathos (though not so deep as Mr. Dickens') is exquisite; the more so, perhaps, because he seems to struggle against it, and to be half ashamed of being caught in the melting mood: but the attempt to be caustic, satirical, ironical, or philosophical, on such occasions, is uniformly vain; and again and again have we found reason to admire how an originally fine and kind nature remains essentially free from worldliness, and, in the highest pride of intellect, pays homage to the heart.

'Vanity Fair' was certainly meant for a satire: the follies, foibles and weaknesses (if not vices) of the world we live in, were to be shown up in it, and we can hardly be expected to learn philanthropy from the contemplation of them. Yet the author's real creed is evidently expressed in these few short sentences:

'The world is a looking-glass, and gives forth to every man the reflection of his own face. Frown at it, and it will in turn look sourly upon you; laugh at it and with it, and it is a jolly kind companion; and so let all young persons take their choice.'

But this theory of life does not lead Mr. Thackeray to the conclusion that virtue is invariably its own reward, nor prevent him from thinking that the relative positions held by great and small, prosperous and unprosperous, in social estimation, might sometimes be advantageously reversed. M. Emile Souvestre, the author of the very remarkable novel entitled '*Riche et Pauvre*,' has written another novel of striking merit in its way, entitled '*Les Reprouvés*.' The intended moral is indicated in a prefatory chapter, where the respectable people and the reprobates (*les reprouvés*) are supposed to be drawn up in the presence of an all-seeing judge; — the respectables, 'all honourable men,' but including the mean, the cold, the unsympathising, the ungenerous, the envious, the hard-hearted, the true self-seekers of this world, who always side with the strongest, get out of the way of a falling friend as cagerly as of a falling house, and define gratitude in their inmost souls as 'a lively sense of favours to come;' the reprobates, reckless, thoughtless, improvident, bankrupt in estate and character, but including many who had become so through the dishonesty or injustice of others, the victims of misplaced confidence or ill-requited affection. The judge makes a sign; the breasts of both classes are laid bare; and in the hearts of a large proportion of the respectables is a serpent, in the hearts of a large proportion of the reprobates a star. Take self-sacrifice as the test of virtue, and the moral (though a dangerous one) will not be found so entirely fallacious as it may probably be thought at first. Mr. Thackeray does not altogether adopt it, but he has a hard hit or two at the inequalities of our social order: —

'If mere parsimony would have made a man rich, Sir Pitt Crawley might have become very wealthy — if he had been an attorney in a country town, with no capital but his brains, it is very possible that he would have turned them to good account, and might have achieved for himself a very considerable influence and competency. But he was unluckily endowed with a good name and a large though encumbered estate, both of which went rather to injure than to advance him. He had a taste for law, which cost him many thousands yearly; and being a great deal too clever to be robbed, as he said, by any single agent, allowed his affairs to be mismanaged by a dozen, whom he all equally mistrusted. He was such a sharp landlord, that he could hardly find any but bankrupt tenants; and such a close farmer, as to grudge almost the seed to the ground; whereupon revengeful Nature grudged him the crops which she granted to more liberal husbandmen. He speculated in every possible way; he worked mines; bought canal shares; horsed coaches; took government contracts, and was the busiest man and magistrate of his county. As he would not pay honest agents at his granite-quarry, he had the satisfaction

of finding that four overseers ran away, and took fortunes with them, to America. For want of proper precautions, his coal-mines filled with water: the government flung his contract of damaged beef upon his hands: and for his coach-horses, every mail proprietor in the kingdom knew that he lost more horses than any man in the country, from under-feeding and buying cheap. In disposition he was sociable, and far from being proud; nay, he rather preferred the society of a farmer or a horse-dealer to that of a gentleman, like my Lord, his son: he was fond of drink, of swearing, of joking with the farmers' daughters: he was never known to give away a shilling or to do a good action, but was of a pleasant, sly, laughing mood, and would cut his joke and drink his glass with a tenant, and sell him up the next day; or have his laugh with the poacher he was transporting with equal good humour. His politeness for the fair sex has already been hinted at by Miss Rebecca Sharp—in a word, the whole baronetage, peerage, commonage of England, did not contain a more cunning, mean, selfish, foolish, disreputable old man. That blood-red hand of Sir Pitt Crawley's would be in anybody's pocket except his own; and it is with grief and pain, that, as admirers of the British aristocracy, we find ourselves obliged to admit the existence of so many ill qualities in a person whose name is in Debrett.

'One great cause why Mr. Crawley had such a hold over the affections of his father resulted from money arrangements. The Baronet owed his son a sum of money out of the jointure of his mother, which he did not find it convenient to pay; indeed he had an almost invincible repugnance to paying anybody, and could only be brought by force to discharge his debts. Miss Sharp calculated (for she became, as we shall hear speedily, inducted into most of the secrets of the family) that the mere payment of his creditors cost the honourable baronet several hundreds yearly; but this was a delight he could not forego; he had a savage pleasure in making the poor wretches wait, and in shifting from court to court and from term to term the period of satisfaction. What's the good of being in parliament, he said, if you must pay your debts? Hence, indeed, his position as a senator was not a little useful to him.

'Vanity Fair! Vanity Fair! Here was a man who could not spell, and did not care to read; who had the habits and the cunning of a boor; whose aim in life was pettifogging; who never had a taste, or emotion, or enjoyment, but what was sordid and foul; and yet he had rank, and honours, and power, somehow; and was a dignitary of the land and a pillar of the state. He was high sheriff, and rode in a golden coach. Great ministers and statesmen courted him; and in Vanity Fair he had a higher place than the most brilliant genius or spotless virtue.'

Still the balance is fairly held. There are good people of quality as well as bad in his pages,—pretty much as we find them in the world; and the work is certainly not written with the view of proving the want of re-organisation in society, nor indeed of proving any thing else, which to us is a great relief.

Mrs. Opie and Miss Edgeworth went quite far enough, when they made the illustration of some one particular rule or precept the main object of their stories, as in 'White Lies,' 'Murad the Unlucky,' &c. &c. Miss Martineau went a great deal too far when she made the inculcation of a doubtful (or at least disputed) doctrine in political economy the main object of *hers*; for in all such cases the question must be begged, and it is obviously just as easy to sketch a ploughman's family thrown out of employ through the abolition of the corn laws, as a weaver's or cotton-spinner's reduced to the verge of starvation by the enactment of them. In fact, the mixture spoils two good things, as Charles Lamb (Elia) used to say of brandy and water; and we heartily rejoice that Mr. Thackeray has kept his science and political economy (if he has any) for some other emergency, and given us a plain old-fashioned love-story, which any genuine novel reader of the old school may honestly, plentifully, and conscientiously cry over.

We fear a novel reader must be literally of the old school to enter fully into the humour of the work; for the scene is laid when George the Fourth was (not king, but) regent; the most stirring period is the Waterloo year, 1815; and the dress, manner, modes of thought, amusements, &c. &c. are supposed to be in keeping. The war fever was at its height: Napoleon was regarded as an actual monster: the belief that one Englishman could beat two Frenchmen, and ought to do it whenever he had an opportunity, was universal, (perhaps beneficially so, for 'those can conquer who believe they can'): the stage coach was the only mode of travelling for the commonalty: gentlemen occasionally attended prize-fights: top-boots and hessians were the common wear: black neckcloths were confined to the military; and tight integuments for the nether man were held indispensable; so much so, indeed, that when some rash innovators attempted to introduce trousers at Almack's, the indignant patronesses instantly posted up a notification, that, 'in future, no gentleman 'would on any account be admitted without breeches.'\*

The *dramatis personæ* are not so easily described or enumerated; and the plot is less an object of attention than the episodes. We fear, however, that we cannot calculate on general familiarity with the story, and must attempt an outline of it.

Scene the first: Miss Pemberton's academy for young ladies on Chiswick Mall. Two pupils are just leaving it in company:

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\* This fact, curiously enough, is forgotten in the woodcuts, old Sedley, Mr. Chopper, Rawdon Crawley, &c. &c., being represented in trousers.

Amelia Sedley, the daughter of a prosperous stockbroker, who lives in Russell Square and keeps his carriage; and Rebecca Sharp, an artful pupil, who has served her time and (after a short visit to the Sedleys) is about to take upon herself the responsible duty of governess in a family of distinction. These are the heroines, and share the main interest of the tale so equally, that, if more than one heroine is, critically speaking, inadmissible, they must be considered as discharging the duties of the office in co-partnership, like the two sheriffs of London, who, in the eye of the law, constitute but one sheriff. Amelia is a gentle, amiable, sweet-tempered girl, who cannot be better described than in the oft-quoted lines of Wordsworth —

‘ A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature’s daily food;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.’

Rebecca is of a totally different character, and the writer has exhibited no small knowledge of the world, combined with considerable artistical skill, in conceiving and developing it. The daughter of a poor artist and a French *artiste*, (whom she mentions in after life as an *émigrée* Montmorency,) Rebecca has her way to win against a host of disadvantages; and apparently no great amount of personal advantages to set against them. She has simply good hair, a clear complexion, figure neat though small, and eyes expressive though greenish; but she has that which amply compensates for the want of more decided attractions,—an intuitive perception of the multifarious manifestations and workings of that master passion or weakness of the human heart and mind, vanity; she has temper when she wants it; and she has in perfection what, perhaps, comprises or implies every other requisite to social conquest, that fine nameless quality called tact.

All travellers in the East are agreed that a certain air of conscious importance is indispensable; the Orientals, they tell us, have no notion that it can be worth their while to respect any one who does not respect himself; and if a pacha with two tails does you the honour of a visit, you ought to demean yourself as if you were a pacha with three. But did it never strike these clever speculators, that precisely the same principle of human action is at work among large numbers of our countrymen? or did they ever know a really good position in English society obtained, or maintained, by crouching? On the contrary, Van Amburgh’s safety among the lions and tigers of his menagerie, did not more certainly depend on his showing no sign of

fear, than the position of a new man or woman among the lions and tigers of the great world of London depends on his or her fearlessly confronting them. Rebecca sees this, and acts upon it; nor is it possible to help following her brave but somewhat unprincipled career with a certain degree of sympathy.

She subdues every one: the stingy, litigious, disreputable, old baronet; the stiff, starched, methodical, methodistical, elder son; the bold, blustering dragoon; the old beau; the young dandy, &c.; but before going further into particulars, we must name the principal characters of the novel. There are, first, Amelia's father, mother, and brother, all highly finished pictures in their way, though we do not think John Sedley (the brother) should have been made to take flight at Brussels, leaving his sister in the lurch; then, Amelia's lover, and afterwards husband, George Osborne, with *his* father (the rich tallow merchant) and sisters; then the Crawley family, including Sir Pitt and Lady Crawley, the eldest son Pitt, the younger, Rawden, in the Life Guards; the two hoyden daughters, to whom Rebecca plays governess for a period; the parson brother, the Reverend Bute Crawley, and his wife; and the half-sister, Miss Crawley, with her rather free opinions and seventy thousand pounds in the three per cents. Nor must William Dobbin be forgotten, or classed with the minor personages of the tale, which would be as imperfect without him, as 'Roderic Random' without Strap, or 'Tom Jones' without Partridge.

The main plot is soon told, so far as it has been developed. George Osborne and Amelia Sedley have been always intended for each other; and Amelia is devotedly attached to George, who, though flattered by her attachment, is very far from returning it with equal ardour; and, indeed, is one of those common characters, in whom what they call love is little better than gratified vanity at the best. The precise relation in which these young people stand to one another will be best illustrated by a quotation.

Captain Dobbin has just been pointing out to George the propriety of his being a little more attentive:—

'The day after the little conversation at Chatham barracks, young Osborne, to show that he would be as good as his word, prepared to go to town, thereby incurring Captain Dobbin's applause. "I should have liked to make her a little present," Osborne said to his friend in confidence, "only I am quite out of cash until my father tips up." But Dobbin would not allow this good nature and generosity to be balked, and so accommodated Mr. Osborne with a few pound notes, which the latter took, after a little faint scruple.

'And I dare say he would have bought something very handsome for.



Amelia, only, getting off the coach in Fleet Street, he was attracted by a handsome shirt-pin in a jeweller's window, which he could not resist; and having paid for that, had very little money to spare for indulging in any further exercise of kindness. Never mind: you may be sure it was not his presents Amelia wanted. When he came to Russell Square her face lighted up as if he had been sunshine. The little cares, fears, tears, timid misgivings, sleepless fancies of I don't know how many days and nights, were forgotten, under one moment's influence of that familiar, irresistible smile. He beamed on her from the drawing-room door — magnificent, with ambrosial whiskers, like a god. Sambo, whose face as he announced Captain Osbin (having conferred a brevet rank on that young officer) blazed with a sympathetic grin, saw the little girl start, and flush, and jump up from her watching-place in the window; and Sambo retreated: and as soon as the door was shut, she went fluttering to Lieutenant George Osborne's heart as if it was the only natural home for her to nestle in. Oh, thou poor panting little soul! The very finest tree in the whole forest, with the straightest stem, and the strongest arms, and the thickest foliage, wherein you choose to build and coo, may be marked, for what you know, and may be down with a crash ere long. What an old, old simile that is, between man and timber!

'In the meanwhile, George kissed her very kindly on her forehead and glistening eyes, and was very gracious and good; and she thought his diamond shirt-pin (which she had not known him to wear before) the prettiest ornament ever seen.

'The observant reader, who has marked our young Lieutenant's previous behaviour, and has preserved our report of the brief conversation which he has just had with Captain Dobbin, has possibly come to certain conclusions regarding the character of Mr. Osborne. Some cynical Frenchman has said that there are two parties to a love-transaction: the one who loves, and the other who condescends to be so treated. Perhaps the love is occasionally on the man's side: perhaps on the lady's. Perhaps some infatuated swain has ere this mistaken insensibility for modesty, dulness for maiden-reserve, mere vacuity for sweet bashfulness, and a goose, in a word, for a swan. Perhaps some beloved female subscriber has arrayed an ass in the splendour and glory of her imagination; admired his dulness as manly simplicity; worshipped his selfishness as manly superiority; treated his stupidity as majestic gravity, and used him as the brilliant fairy Titania did a certain carpenter of Athens. I think I have seen such comedies of errors going on in the world. But this is certain, that Amelia believed her lover to be one of the most gallant and brilliant men in the empire: and it is possible Lieutenant Osborne thought so too.'

The bankruptcy of Mr. Sedley brings matters to a crisis, and George marries Amelia, as much on account of his father's opposition as from any feeling of affection or generosity; and here, as in the whole management of this character, the author has shown an intimate acquaintance with the heart. The father

forthwith proceeds to the disinheriting of George. The scene of the ceremony is thus described—

‘Behind Mr. Osborne’s dining-room was the usual apartment, which went in his house by the name of the study; and was sacred to the master of the house. Hither Mr. Osborne would retire of a Sunday forenoon, when not minded to go to church; and here pass the morning in his crimson leather chair, reading the paper. A couple of glazed book-cases were here, containing standard works in stout gilt bindings. The “Annual Register,” the “Gentleman’s Magazine,” “Blair’s Sermons,” and “Hume and Smollett.” From year’s end to year’s end he never took one of these volumes from the shelf; but there was no member of the family that would dare for his life to touch one of the books, except upon those rare Sunday evenings when there was no dinner party, and when the great scarlet Bible and Prayer-Book were taken out from the corner where they stood beside his copy of the *Peerage*, and the servants being rung up to the dining parlour, Osborne read the evening service to his family in a loud, grating, pompous voice. No member of the household, child or domestic, ever entered that room without a certain terror. Here he checked the housekeeper’s accounts, and overhauled the butler’s cellar-book. Hence he could command, across the clean gravel courtyard, the back entrance of the stable, with which one of his bells communicated, and into this yard the coachman issued from his premises as into a dock, and Osborne swore at him from the study window. Four times a year Miss Wirt entered this apartment to get her salary; and his daughters to receive their quarterly allowance. George, as a boy, had been horsewhipped in this room many times; his mother sitting sick on the stair listening to the cuts of the whip. The boy was scarcely ever known to cry under the punishment; the poor woman used to fondle and kiss him secretly, and give him money to soothe him when he came out.’

With two thousand pounds for his fortune, and habits of unrestrained self-indulgence, George rejoins his regiment at Brussels, and carries his pretty wife with him. Rebecca, the rival heroine, is also there as Mrs. Rawdon Crawley, the wife of Sir Pitt’s younger son, now acting aide-de-camp to General Tufto, a middle-aged lady-killer in love with the piquante ex-governess. The period is an anxious and eventful one,—the fortnight or three weeks preceding the battle of Waterloo; and the life of Brussels is admirably employed to bring the various peculiarities of the principal personages into play. Seasons of danger are seasons of high excitement: both mind and body are kept in a constant state of feverish agitation; and, in the uncertainty as to what is to happen next, every passing pleasure is eagerly caught at and enjoyed with an additional zest. The butterfly population of Paris was gossiping, flirting, smoking cigars, and taking ices on the Boulevards, when the cannon were

thundering from Mont-martre; and the booths of 'Vanity Fair' were never laid out with more tempting profusion, or more eagerly frequented, than in the Belgian capital on the eve of an event which was to alter the history of the world:—

'The sight of the very great company of lords and ladies, and fashionable persons who thronged the town and appeared in every public place, filled George's truly British soul with intense delight. They flung off that happy frigidity and insolence of demeanour which occasionally characterises the great at home, and appearing in numberless public places, condescended to mingle with the rest of the company whom they met there. One night at a party given by the general of the division to which George's regiment belonged, he had the honour of dancing with Lady Blanche Thistlewood, Lord Bareacres' daughter; he bustled for ices and refreshments for the two noble ladies; he pushed and squeezed for Lady Bareacres' carriage; he bragged about the Countess when he got home, in a way which his own father could not have surpassed. He called upon the ladies the next day; he rode by their side in the Park; he asked their party to a great dinner at a restaurateur's, and was quite wild with exultation when they agreed to come. Old Bareacres, who had not much pride and a large appetite, would go for a dinner anywhere.

"I hope there will be no women beside our own party," Lady Bareacres said, after reflecting upon the invitation which had been made, and accepted with too much precipitancy.

"Gracious heaven, Mamma—you don't suppose the man would bring his wife," shrieked Lady Blanche, who had been languishing in George's arms in the newly-imported waltz for hours the night before. "The men are bearable, but their women—"

"Wife, just married, devilish pretty woman, I hear," the old Earl said.

"Well, my dear Blanche," said the mother, "I suppose as Papa wants to go, we must go: but we needn't know them in England, you know." And so, determined to cut their new acquaintance in Bond Street, these great folks went to eat his dinner at Brussels, and, condescending to make him pay for their pleasure, showed their dignity by making his wife uncomfortable, and carefully excluding her from the conversation. 'This is a species of dignity in which the high-bred British female reigns supreme.'

Not the high-bred British female, but the *soi-disante* leader of fashion; an individual of a genus which is daily becoming rarer and rarer, though we fear that so long as man is man (or woman woman) there will be an occasional indulgence in exclusiveness; nor can Mr. Thackeray be ignorant, that precisely the same description of superciliousness may be observed in the demeanour of Mrs. Alderman Dobson to Mrs. Deputy Tibbs, as in that of the Countess of Bareacres to Mrs. George Osborne.

' There was a sound of revelry by night,  
 And Belgium's capital had gather'd there  
 Her beauty and her chivalry; and bright  
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men:  
 \* \* \* \* \*

But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell.'

It was the sound of the cannon at Ligny and Quatre Bras, and among those it summoned to the field (of glory for both, and death for one) were Captain George Osborne and Captain Rawdon Crawley, leaving their respective wives in characteristic attitudes and occupations; poor Amelia powerless and almost motionless with grief,—Rebecca collecting and turning all her moveable property into cash, and making every other fitting preparation for a retreat. George is killed; Rawdon survives, and becomes (through a mistake of the author, in confounding the Life Guards with *the* Guards,) Captain and Lieutenant-colonel and C. B. Amelia goes back to England to live, in poverty and retirement, entirely devoted to her boy. Rebecca continues her career of vanity and dissipation, first in Paris, and then in London, living in each of these luxurious capitals luxuriously on nothing a year: 'the word *nothing* (as Mr. T. explains) being used to signify something unknown; meaning, simply, that we don't know how the gentleman in question defrays the expenses of his establishment.' In the case of Rebecca and her spouse, their pocket-money is won at billiards, écarté, or piquet, by the colonel; the lady's gowns, shawls, bonnets, lacc, and *bijouterie* are presents from elderly adorers, who do her the honour of passing their evenings in her pretty drawing-room in Curzon Street; and as for the butcher's, baker's, and greengrocer's bills, they stand on the same footing as the house-rent, and are never paid at all. All hope of getting any part of the maiden-aunt's fortune has long been over, and we do not well see how this interesting couple are to be rescued from the ruin and disgrace impending over them at the end of the 11th (the November) Number, which comprises the latest intelligence that can well reach us prior to the conclusion of this article. Mr. Thackeray, however, has clearly a lurking kindness for both of them, and Rawdon's affection for his boy (one of the finest touches in the story) has gained him many friends, who would be sorry to see him remanded by the Insolvent Court.

When the first part of *Clarissa* appeared, the winding up of the plot was left in doubt, and letter after letter poured in upon Richardson, imploring him to avert the worst portion of the catastrophe. Nor did the heroine monopolise the entire sympathies of the enlightened public of those days, for we find one

female correspondent eager for the conversion of Lovelace, and intreating Richardson to 'save his soul;' as if (adds Sir Walter Scott) there had been actually a living sinner in the case, and his future state had literally depended on the decision to be pronounced by her admired author. We will not ask Mr. Thackeray to save Rawdon Crawley's soul, but we should be glad if he could save his body from the bailiffs, and appoint him to a consulship on the coast of Africa or South America; where Mrs. Rawdon would be sufficiently punished, by having no elderly generals or profligate peers to flirt with and no tradesmen or hotel-keepers to cheat. As regards Mrs. George Osborne, no intercession is needed; the precise lot we should have selected being obviously in store for her. She is to marry Major (or it may be Lieutenant-general, Sir William,) Dobbin; and we are happy to see, from the concluding sentences of the November Number that she is not likely to prove insensible to the happiness in store for her:—

'One day they kindly came over to Amelia with news which they were *sure* would delight her — something *very* interesting about their dear William.

' "What was it: was he coming home?" she asked with pleasure beaming in her eyes.

' "Oh, no — not the least — but they had very good reason to believe that dear William was about to be married — and to a relation of a very dear friend of Amelia's — to Miss Glorvina O'Dowd, Sir Michael O'Dowd's sister, who had gone out to join Lady O'Dowd at Madras — a very beautiful and accomplished girl, everybody said."

' Amelia said "Oh!" Amelia was very *very* happy indeed. But she supposed Glorvina could not be like her old acquaintance, who was most kind — but — but she was very happy indeed. And by some impulse, of which I cannot explain the meaning, she took George in her arms and kissed him with an extraordinary tenderness. Her eyes were quite moist when she put the child down; and she scarcely spoke a word during the whole of the drive — though she was so very happy indeed.'

The interest, however, is too much divided to be deep; and what strikes us most in the conduct of the narrative is, the apparent ease with which such a number and variety of characters are brought upon the stage without crossing or jostling. Numerous, too, and varied as they are, almost every one of them is obviously a copy from the life; whether it be the merchant indorsing his son's letters from school; the old military fribble penning a *poulet* to the opera dancer; the jolly sporting parson receiving a curtain lecture from his wife; Mrs. Major O'Dowd packing her husband's best épauettes in the tea-canister; or 'the

'Tutbury Pet and the Rottingdean Fibber, with three other gentlemen of their acquaintance,' who suddenly appeared on the cliff at Brighton to the confusion of poor James Crawley, 'in a tax-cart, drawn by a bang-up pony, dressed in white flannel coats with mother-of-pearl buttons.' Mr. Thackeray's familiarity with foreign manners and modes of thinking, adds greatly to the reader's confidence; and we believe lady readers are pretty generally agreed that he has penetrated farther below the surface of their hearts than any other male writer; with perhaps the exception of Balzac, whose knowledge is confined to French women. Yet, though uniformly disposed to exalt the good qualities, he never glosses over the weaknesses, of the sex. A very useful hint may be taken, and we hope in good part, from this passage:

'Has the beloved reader, in his experience of society, never heard similar remarks by good-natured female friends—who always wonder what you *can* see in Miss Smith that is so fascinating; or what *could* induce Major Jones to propose for that silly insignificant simpering Miss Thompson, who has nothing but her wax-doll face to recommend her? What is there in a pair of pink cheeks and blue eyes forsooth? these dear Moralists ask, and hint wisely that the gifts of genius, the accomplishments of the mind, the mastery of Mangnall's Questions, and a lady-like knowledge of botany and geology, the gift of making poetry, the power of rattling sonatas in the Herz-manner, and so forth, are far more valuable endowments for a female, than those fugitive charms which a few years will inevitably tarnish. It is quite edifying to hear women speculate upon the worthlessness and the duration of beauty.

'But though virtue is a much finer thing, and those hapless creatures who suffer under the misfortune of good looks ought to be continually put in mind of the fate which awaits them; and though, very likely, the heroic female character which ladies admire is a more glorious and beautiful object than the kind, fresh, smiling, artless, tender little domestic goddess, whom men are inclined to worship—yet the latter and inferior sort of women must have this consolation—that the men *do* admire them after all; and that, in spite of all our kind friends' warnings and protests, we go on in our desperate error and folly, and shall to the end of the chapter. Indeed, for my own part, though I have been repeatedly told by persons for whom I have the greatest respect, that Miss Brown is an insignificant chit, and Mrs. White has nothing but her *petit minois chiffonné*, and Mrs. Black has not a word to say for herself, yet I know that I have had the most delightful conversations with Mrs. Black (of course, my dear Madam, they are inviolable): I see all the men in a cluster round Mrs. White's chair: all the young fellows battling to dance with Miss Brown: and so I am tempted to think that to be despised by her sex is a very great compliment to a woman.'

Better, and in a much higher vein, is the scene in which Amelia takes leave of Dobbin:—

‘“I am come to say good-bye, Amelia,” said he, taking her slender little white hand gently.

‘“Good-bye? and where are you going?” she said, with a smile.

‘“Send the letters to the agents,” he said; “they will forward them; for you will write to me, won’t you? I shall be away a long time.”

‘“I’ll write to you about Georgy,” she said. “Dear William, how good you have been to him and to me. Look at him! Isn’t he like an angel?”

‘The little pink hands of the child closed mechanically round the honest soldier’s finger, and Amelia looked up in his face with bright maternal pleasure. The cruellest looks could not have wounded him more than that glance of hopeless kindness. He bent over the child and mother. He could not speak for a moment. And it was with all his strength that he could force himself to say a God bless you. “God bless you,” said Amelia, and held up her face and kissed him.

‘“Hush! Don’t wake Georgy!” she added, as William Dobbin went to the door with heavy steps. She did not hear the noise of his cab-wheels as he drove away: she was looking at the child, who was laughing in his sleep.’

Fine reflections, compressed into short sentences, abound; for example,—

‘Oh these women! they nurse and cuddle their presentiments, and make darlings of their ugliest thoughts, as they do of their deformed children.’

Mr. Dickens stands as completely alone and unrivalled in the power of seizing the physiognomy of a place, as Mr. Edwin Landseer in that of seizing the physiognomy of a dog. Good, therefore, as Mr. Thackeray’s sketches of localities are, we will not run the remotest risk of provoking comparisons by quoting from them; but we must give one example of the melancholy, half-sentimental bitterness which so strongly characterises all the productions of his pen:

‘Perhaps in *Vanity Fair* there are no better satires than letters. Take a bundle of your dear friend’s of ten years back—your dear friend whom you hate now. Look at a file of your sister’s: how you clung to each other till you quarrelled about the twenty-pound legacy! Get down the round-hand scrawls of your son who has half broken your heart with selfish undutifulness since; or a parcel of your own, breathing endless ardour and love eternal, which were sent back by your mistress when she married the Nabob—your mistress for whom you now care no more than for Queen Elizabeth. Vows, love promises, confidences, gratitude, how queerly they read after a while! There ought to be a law in *Vanity Fair* ordering the destruction of

every written document (except receipted tradesmen's bills) after a certain brief and proper interval. Those quacks and misanthropes who advertise indelible Japan ink, should be made to perish along with their wicked discoveries. The best ink for *Vanity Fair* use would be one that faded utterly in a couple of days, and left the paper clean and blank, so that you might write on it to somebody else.'

It is hardly a reflection on a writer whose originality is indisputable, to say that two or three of his characters bear a partial resemblance to two or three master pieces of his greatest predecessors; and we cannot help thinking that Amelia, the wife of the careless vain spendthrift Captain Osborn, must be a near relation, first cousin at the farthest, of Amelia, the wife of our old acquaintance, the equally careless though not quite so vain spendthrift, Captain Booth; while Dobbin, though already a major and in a fair way to become a general and G. C. B., bears (as already intimated) some affinity to the ex-schoolmaster Partridge, and a very close one to the ex-barber Strap. The unconscious imitation into which the author has dropped in these instances, has in no respect impaired the truth of his delineations; for Amelias and Dobbins, Partridges and Straps, belong to all ages and are completely independent of conventionalities; but much of Sir Pitt Crawley's language is far better fitted for Squire Western and Parson Trulliber, who suggested it, than for a Baronet of ancient lineage, who had sat in parliament for a family borough during the first fifteen years of the present century.

We have said, with reference to '*Vanity Fair*,' that Mr. Thackeray never exhausts, elaborates, or insists too much upon anything; but we cannot repeat the compliment with reference to '*The Snob Papers*,' in '*Punch*.' The original notion of these was not a bad one, but it is literally worked thread-bare; and the author appears at last to have lost sight entirely of the true meaning of the term. According to him, every man who does a mean or dirty action (for example, an earl who haggles with or cheats a tradesman) is a *snob*. To give a precise definition of the word would puzzle the best of living etymologists; but we may safely say, that, in popular acceptance — the *jus et norma loquendi* — it implies both pretension and vulgarity. We include, of course, vulgarity of sentiment; and we admit that a loud, insolent, blustering, overbearing leader of fashion, or a cringing, mean-spirited follower, though rich, well-born, well-dressed and titled, may be a snob. But in speculating on the mixed and singularly constituted society of London, especial care should be taken not to confound in one common censure



the legitimate success of cultivation and refinement, and the spurious triumphs of sycophancy. There really is no denying that the best society is emphatically the best: it is a laudable object of ambition to be received on a footing of equality in circles comprising most of the leading statesmen, artists and men of letters, as well as the beauties and fine gentlemen of the day: and if Miss B. or Lady C. sends Mr. D. a card for her evening parties, we submit, with all due deference to Mr. Thackeray, that he is not at once to be set down as a snob for accepting it, nor even for talking a little the day after of the distinguished persons whose acquaintance he may have made. In the 'Snob Papers' it seems taken for granted that any association between persons of unequal rank, or any mention of a man or woman of rank by a plebeian, implies degradation or meanness of some sort. It was the sagacious remark of Swift, that very nice persons must have very nasty ideas; and (if Mr. Thackeray had not amply redeemed himself from the suspicion by the uniform tone of 'Vanity Fair') we should be apt to suspect, upon the same principle, that those who are so extremely anxious to bring in others guilty of snobbishness must be snobs.

We have another fault to find with his minor works, particularly discernible in that clever and amusing production of his entitled 'Mrs. Perkins' Ball.' Why are the middle classes to be satirised if they venture to give parties without the means and appliances of wealth? Why are young ladies and gentlemen to be prevented dancing except to Weippert's music, or supping except under Mr. Gunter's presidency? Or what is there laughable in the necessity under which a ball-giver, in a house of limited dimensions, finds herself of taking down a bed to form a card-room, or making a passage or closet do duty as a *boudoir*?

'Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se  
Quam quod *ridiculos* homines facit.'

This is only too true; but we fairly own it is a kind of fun we could never relish. When Balzac describes the poor student, 'unable to raise a franc for a cab, picking his way along the pavement towards the house where he is to meet his lady-love, till his visit is rendered impossible, and all his hopes are blighted for ever, by a splash,—we sympathise with him, instead of laughing at him; and the petty miseries entailed on the Perkins' family by their hospitality and good-nature, were fraught, to us, with more melancholy than mirth. The worst of setting up for a satirist is, that when food for satire is no longer to be

found in sufficient quantity, it must be manufactured, or discovered by dint of a minute scrutiny into the allowable shifts and pardonable weaknesses of mankind or womankind.

A sturdy, untravelled friend of ours once startled a circle composed principally of Oriental travellers, who had been taking the lion's share of the conversation, by suddenly exclaiming, in a tone of deep conviction, that the East was a humbug. Mr. Thackeray's 'Journey from Cornhill to Cairo in the steamers of 'the Peninsular and Oriental Company,' must have been written for the express purpose of establishing this great fact; *e.g.*:

'The palace of the seraglio, the cloister with marble pillars, the hall of the ambassadors, the impenetrable gate guarded by eunuchs and ichoglans, has a romantic look in print; but not so in reality. Most of the marble is wood, almost all the gilding is faded, the guards are shabby, the foolish perspectives painted on the walls are half cracked off. *The place looks like Vauxhall in the day time.*'

He tells us that he actually saw a Turkish lady drive up to Sultan Achmet's mosque in a *Brougham*, and felt, on seeing her, that the schoolmaster was really abroad. The first impression of the East, he admits, is pleasingly redolent of Arabian Nights associations, but there is no necessity for penetrating into the interior to revel in them:—

'There lay the town (Smyrna) with minarets and cypresses, domes and castles; great guns were firing off, and the blood-red flag of the Sultan flaring over the fort ever since sunrise; woods and mountains came down to the gulf's edge, and as you looked at them with the telescope, there peeped out of the general mass a score of pleasant episodes of Eastern life: there were cottages with quaint roofs; silent cool kiosks, where the chief of the eunuchs brings down the ladies of the harem. I saw Hassan, the fisherman, getting his nets; and Ali Baba going off with his donkey to the great forest for wood. . . . A man only sees the miracle once; though you yearn after it ever so, it won't come again. I saw nothing of Ali Baba and Hassan the next time we came to Smyrna, and had some doubts (recollecting the badness of the inn) about landing at all. A person who wishes to understand France and the East should come out in a yacht to Calais or Smyrna, land for two hours, and never afterwards go back again.'

This is a dangerous kind of observer for the Colts of the Green Island; and 'The Irish Sketch-Book' is not a whit inferior to 'Paddiana,' in sketches, anecdotes, and traits of character, illustrative of the peculiarities of the race. We put aside for the moment the all-important question whether the Celtish part of the population of Ireland, the finest *pisantry* in Europe, have been made idle and improvident by bad government, or can be made industrious and provident by good. That most of their

present misery results from their idleness and improvidence, may be placed beyond the possibility of a doubt. We ask with Mr. Thackeray —

‘Is the landlord’s absence the reason why the house is filthy, and Biddy lolls in the porch all day? Upon my word, I have heard people talk as if, when Pat’s thatch was blown off, the landlord ought to fetch the straw and the ladder, and mend it himself. People need not be dirty, if they are ever so idle; if they are ever so poor, pigs and men need not live together. Half an hour’s work, and digging a trench, might remove that filthy dunghill from that filthy window. The smoke might as well come out of the chimney as the door. *Why should not Tim do that, instead of walking a hundred and sixty miles to a race?*’

The author declares that he had the honour of seeing only three landlords of inns during the whole of his progress. ‘I believe these gentlemen commonly, and very naturally, prefer riding with the hounds, or manly sports, to attendance on their guests; and the landladies, if they prefer to play the piano, or to have a game of cards in the parlour, only show a taste at which no one can wonder; for who can expect a lady to be troubling herself with vulgar chance-customers, or looking after Molly in the bedroom, or waiter Tim in the cellar?’ So Molly, when coals are called for, brings them up in a *china plate*; Tim runs up to answer Mr. Titmarsh’s demand for currant jelly with his venison — ‘Sir, there’s no jelly, but I’ve brought you some very fine *lobster sauce*;’ and when the luggage on the public car is shaken loose and sent tumbling about the ears or against the shins of the passengers through bad packing, it has to be put in order by an English bagman (a passenger), whilst the driver stands by grinning, with his hands in his pocket, and a short pipe between his teeth! The provincial tradesmen are just as bad:

‘I went (at Limerick) to buy some of the pretty Limerick gloves (they are chiefly made, as I have since discovered, at Cork). I think the man who sold them had a patent from the Queen; or his Excellency, or both, in his window; but, seeing a friend pass just as I entered the shop, he brushed past, and held his friend in conversation for some minutes, in the street, about the Killarney races, no doubt, or the fun going on at Kilkee. I might have swept away a bagful of walnut shells, containing the flimsy gloves; but, instead, walked out, making him a low bow, and saying I would call next week. He said, *‘Wouldn’t I wait?’* and resumed his conversation; and, no doubt, by this way of doing business, is making a handsome independence.’

The Cork Institution is no less pregnant with instruction than the Limerick tradesman: —

'The plasters are spoiled irrecoverably for want of a sixpenny feather-brush; the dust lies on the walls, and nobody seems to heed it: two shillings a-year would have repaired much of the evil which has happened to this institution; and it is folly to talk of inward dissensions and political differences as causing the ruin of such institutions. Kings or laws don't cause or cure dust and cobwebs; but indolence leaves them to accumulate; and imprudence will not calculate its income, and vanity exaggerates its own powers; and the fault is laid upon that tyrant of a sister kingdom. The whole country is filled with such failures: swaggering beginnings, that could not be carried through; grand enterprises, begun dashingly, and ending in shabby compromises or downright ruin.'

After describing a new house going to rack and ruin, 'I would lay a guinea (we should be happy to back the bet) they were making punch in that house before they could keep the rain out of it; that they had a dinner-party and ball before the floors were firm, or the wainscots painted.'

A writer with such a pen and pencil as Mr. Thackeray's is an acquisition of real and high value to our literature, and we have not the slightest fear that he will either fall off, or write himself out; for, we repeat, he is not a mannerist, and his range of subjects is not limited to a class. High life, middle life, and low life, are (or very soon will be) pretty nearly the same to him: he has fancy as well as feeling; he can either laugh or cry without grimacing; he can skim the surface, and he can penetrate to the core. Let the public give him encouragement, and let him give himself time, and we fearlessly prophesy that he will soon become one of the acknowledged heads of his own peculiar walk of literature.

ART. III.—1. *Address to the Meeting of the British Association, held at Birmingham, 26th August, 1839; with Postscript.* By the Reverend W. VERNON HARCOURT. London, 1840.

2. *Historical Eloge of James Watt.* By M. ARAGO, Perpetual Secretary to the Academy of Sciences. Translated, with Additional Notes and an Appendix, by JAMES P. MUIRHEAD, M.A. Oxford. London, 1839.

3. *Correspondence of the late James Watt on his Discovery of the Composition of Water; with a Letter from his Son.* Edited, with Introductory Remarks, and an Appendix, by JAMES P. MUIRHEAD, F. R. S. E. London, 1846.

LATE in the summer of 1783, a voice went forth from Paris, announcing that the great French chemist, Lavoisier,

(assisted by his illustrious colleague, La Place,) had at last succeeded in discovering the true nature and constitution of Water; and completely proved that this most ancient Element was no longer to be regarded as an element at all, or a simple and primary substance; but was truly a compound body, produced by the combination of two airs or gases, which then first received, and have since retained, the well-known names of Hydrogen and Oxygen, respectively. The credit of this great discovery was of course universally ascribed, at the time, to these distinguished persons, at least on the continent of Europe; and their claim to it was, by a very excusable partiality, long afterwards maintained by the great body of their countrymen: and, for anything we know, may be still cherished among them, by some particularly patriotic individuals. It happened, however, that *in England* it was well known at the time to many men of science, both in Birmingham and in London, that this same discovery had been fully made, and clearly announced, several months before, both by Watt and by Cavendish: And it was accordingly suspected by most of them, and *actually known to a few*, not only that this English discovery had been communicated to the French philosophers before they began the experiments by which it was ultimately confirmed, but that they had at first expressed their disbelief in its reality; and had only been induced to engage in those experiments, by their desire to justify their original incredulity—or at all events to test, by the evidence of their own senses, the truth of a conclusion which appeared too startling to be admitted upon any lower authority.

Up to this time, the original experiments and conclusions of the English philosophers, though mostly embodied in contemporary records, and actually communicated to a considerable number of curious inquirers, had not been published in any shape to the world at large; and, consequently, were far less generally known than the pirated edition of them which had been circulated with great industry from Paris. But in the course of the following year (1784), papers containing full accounts of them, both by Watt and by Cavendish, were publicly read at meetings of the Royal Society of London, and shortly afterwards printed in their Transactions. Even these publications, however, though they no doubt produced their effect in this country, and never met, we believe, with contradiction any where, made their way but slowly and partially on the Continent; and consequently left the unscrupulous French Disciples very generally in possession of the plumes they had borrowed from their Masters. And it was not till two years later, that the scientific world in general was furnished with the means of

judging for themselves of the true merits of the question. But, early in 1786, Sir Charles Blagden, then Secretary of the Royal Society, felt himself called upon to address a letter on the subject to Dr. Lorenz Crell of Helmstadt, the editor of a scientific journal of large circulation, which was printed and disseminated all over Europe in the course of that year. In this letter all the learned men of the world had then the opportunity of reading the following memorable revelation; which, as bearing materially on every point and stage of this controversy, we think it necessary, thus early, to give to our readers entire:—

‘I can certainly give you the best account of the dispute about the first discoverer of the artificial generation of water; as I was the principal instrument through which the first news of *the discovery which had been already made*, was communicated to M. Lavoisier. The following is a short statement of the history:—

‘“In the spring of 1783, Mr. Cavendish communicated to me and other members of the Royal Society, his particular friends, the result of some experiments with which he had for a long time been occupied; and he showed us that, out of them, he must draw the conclusion, that dephlogisticated air was nothing else than water deprived of its phlogiston, and, *vice versâ*, that water was dephlogisticated air united with phlogiston. *About the same time* the news was brought to London, that *Mr. Watt, of Birmingham*, had been induced by some observations to form a similar opinion. *Soon after this*, I went to Paris, and in the company of M. Lavoisier, and some other members of the Royal Academy of Sciences, I gave some account of these new experiments, *and of the opinions founded on them*. They replied, that they had already heard something of the experiments; and, particularly, that Dr. Priestley had repeated them. They did not doubt that, in such a manner, a considerable quantity of water might be obtained; but they felt convinced that it could not come near to the weight of the two species of air employed; *on which account it was not to be regarded as water formed or produced out of the two kinds of air, but as already contained in, and united with, the airs, and merely deposited on their combustion*. This opinion was held by M. Lavoisier, as well as by the rest of the gentlemen who conferred on the subject: but as the experiment appeared to them very remarkable, they unanimously requested M. Lavoisier, who possessed all the necessary apparatus, to repeat the experiment, on a somewhat larger scale, as early as possible. This he complied with on the 24th of June, 1783. From his own account of these experiments, it sufficiently appears that he *had not* then formed the opinion that water was composed of dephlogisticated and inflammable airs; for he expected that a *sort of acid* would be produced by their union. In general, M. Lavoisier cannot, perhaps, be convicted of having said anything directly contrary to truth: but *it can still less be doubted that he concealed a part of the truth*; for he must have acknowledged that I had, some days before, apprised him of Mr. Cavendish's experiments;

whereas, the expression 'il nous apprit' conveys the idea that I had not informed him of them till that very day. In like manner, he has omitted the very material circumstance, that *his experiments were made in consequence of my having so informed him.* He should likewise have stated, not only that Mr. Cavendish had obtained 'une quantité d'eau très sensible,' but that *the water so obtained was equal to the weight of the two airs added together.* And, especially he should have added, that I had made him acquainted with *Messrs. Cavendish and Watt's conclusions; namely, that water, and not an acid or any other substance, was produced by the combustion of the inflammable and dephlogisticated airs.* But these conclusions opened the way to M. Lavoisier's present theory, which perfectly agrees with Mr. Cavendish's, except that he accommodates it to his old theory, which denies the existence of phlogiston. M. Monge's experiments (of which he speaks as made about the same time), were in fact not made till pretty long, I believe at least two months, after M. Lavoisier's own; and were undertaken on receiving information of them. The whole of this history will clearly show you that M. Lavoisier, instead of being led to the discovery by merely following up the experiments begun with M. Buequet in 1777, was induced to institute such experiments *solely* by the account he received from me of our English experiments; and, that *he really discovered nothing but what had been before pointed out to him to have been previously made out and demonstrated in England."*

This seems, and in our opinion is, conclusive as to the French claim to the discovery. But as it has been surmised, in palliation of the disingenuousness which it appears to impute to most eminent and meritorious individuals, that Blagden, when thus writing at the distance of two years, may have misrecalled the extent of the information he had given verbally to the Parisians so long before, it is fortunate that we can now show, from documents recently brought to light, that he had openly given the same account *immediately* on his return to this country; and desired it to be communicated, on his authority, to those whom it most concerned. In a letter accordingly addressed to Watt by Kirwan, in December, 1783, immediately after the former had first heard of the French experiments, and expressed his suspicions of their origin, he says, 'Lavoisier *certainly learned your theory* (not experiments merely, but theory,) from Dr. Blagden, — who first had it from Mr. Cavendish; and afterwards from your letter to Dr. Priestley, which he heard read; and *explained the whole minutely to Lavoisier*, last July (mistake for June). *This he authorised me to tell you.*' And Cavendish himself, in this paper, read in January, 1784, put openly on the record of the Royal Society, that, 'during the last summer a friend of mine gave an account of these experiments to M. Lavoisier, as well as of the conclusion drawn from them, that dephlogisticated

'*air is only water deprived of its phlogiston: but at that time M. Lavoisier was so far from thinking any such opinion warranted, that, till he was prevailed upon to repeat the experiment, he had difficulty in believing that nearly the whole of the two airs could be converted into water.*'

These, we think, were public enough challenges to the advocates for the French discovery; and we are yet to learn that any champion ever appeared to take them up. The consequence has accordingly been, that the opinion of the scientific world has gradually settled down in favour of the English discoverers; and, that even the nationality of Frenchmen has at last given way to this universal conviction. In his *éloge* of Cavendish, in 1812, M. Cuvier distinctly admitted, that Lavoisier had been anticipated by that eminent chemist; and now we have the most distinguished member of the Academy of Sciences and the first of French chemists, M. Arago and M. Dumas, uniting to repudiate the obsolete pretensions of their countrymen—and distinctly awarding the whole merit of the discovery to Watt. It is between these two *English* competitors, therefore, that the controversy has now come to depend; and the questions we are about to consider, and, if possible, to determine, are, Whether Watt or Cavendish was the first to discover and announce the true composition of water? whether they were both independent, though not simultaneous, discoverers? or whether either was indebted for his conclusions to the labours or speculations of the other?

On some of these points we fear there may still be differences of opinion among candid and judicious inquirers; but on most of them we think there is no longer room for dispute: And as, at all events, we have now all the materials for decision which we can ever hope to obtain, it does not seem unreasonable to presume, that a controversy which began in 1783, and has already outlasted the longest Chancery suit on record, should at length be found ripe for judgment. In assuming the function of judging of it, we do not fear to be reminded that we pledge ourselves for the most scrupulous impartiality—the deep respect and admiration which we feel for *both* the competitors securing us, we trust, from any serious risk of violating such a pledge: And, strong as our individual convictions or impressions may be on some points still liable to dispute, we flatter ourselves that we shall not be betrayed into any expression which should raise a question as to the perfect fairness of our intentions. The great original facts, by which we think the issue must be determined, are so proved by contemporary writings as to admit of no serious dispute; and though there are subordinate matters as to which the testimony is less conclusive, the only substantial dif-



ficulties will be found to relate rather to the construction than to the credit of the evidence. In any view, however, it is necessary that we should begin with a brief summary of the facts.

In 1777, Macquer, an eminent French chemist, in burning a quantity of inflammable air at the mouth of an open bottle, and holding a cool porcelain saucer over the flame, observed that it deposited distinct drops of a clear liquor, which appeared to him to be nothing but *pure water*; but did not think of making this appearance the subject of any farther investigation. In April, 1781, Mr. Warltire, an ingenious lecturer on chemistry at Birmingham, on the suggestion of Dr. Priestley and in his presence, fired, by the electric spark, a considerable volume of oxygen, and an inflammable gas (which seems to have been hydrogen) in a *close* glass vessel; and observed not only that most of the airs had disappeared, but that the inside of the glass, when it cooled, was covered with a *dew or moisture*; which they both took to be water: But did not weigh or examine—as their only object in making the experiment was to ascertain, by carefully weighing the apparatus before and after the explosion, whether the *light and heat* which escaped, and were dissipated in the course of it, were or were not *ponderable substances*. The experiment itself, however, being published soon after by Priestley, became known to Cavendish, who, in the course of that and the following year (1781 and 1782) repeated it, with many most patient and elaborate variations: in the course of which he may be said to have ascertained, that something about two volumes of hydrogen (or inflammable air from the metals, as he terms it,) being exploded in a close vessel with one of oxygen, (the dephlogisticated air of those times,) the airs disappeared to within one-fiftieth part of their original bulk; and in their place a quantity of water was deposited, nearly equal in weight to that of the gases employed. In short, though the processes were conducted with far less care and accuracy than those afterwards instituted by Lavoisier, Monge, Berzelius, or Dumas, it is not, we think, to be denied that Cavendish then performed those experiments, and observed those results, from which, either he himself at the time, or Watt at an after time, or he again after Watt, drew the grand and momentous conclusion, that water was not a simple but a compound body; and that it was composed of the two gases we have mentioned, combined in the proportions now specified. But it is most remarkable, that in the original note-book or diary, in which he recorded at the time, and in very great detail, the whole series of these experiments, there is no direct or express notice or intimation that he had actually drawn that conclusion, or made the great discovery which it

implies. The nearest approach to it is, that he repeatedly speaks of the water as having been *condensed* on the sides of the glass — an expression properly descriptive of its mere deposition from the steam or vapour, under the form of which it had first appeared: And, there certainly is no sort of evidence that he ever intimated such a conclusion to any one till very long after. The experiments, themselves, however, he did communicate to Priestley, apparently about the end of 1782 or beginning of 1783. And this brings us at once to the case of his illustrious competitor.

Priestley was then resident at or near Birmingham, in the immediate neighbourhood of Watt, with whom he appears to have lived in great friendship and intimacy; and to have been associated with him, indeed, in many of his philosophical researches. Priestley was then much occupied with a notion that water might be converted into a permanent gas or air (which Watt also had long thought probable), and accordingly proceeded with much eagerness to repeat Cavendish's (or rather his own and Warltire's) experiments, in a great variety of forms. In some of these he found, or, at least reported to Watt that he had found, that on detonating oxygen with a certain proportion of inflammable air, the whole of both airs disappeared to within about one two-hundredth part of their original volume; and left in their place a quantity of pure water equal, as far as could be judged, to the weight of the gases consumed. How this communication was made does not exactly appear; but as it forms no part of the correspondence preserved, it is most likely to have occurred in conversations between the parties, who were continually meeting; and there is every probability, indeed, that at some of these experiments Watt was personally present. But, however his information as to the facts was obtained, it is at least certain that so early as 21st and 22d April, 1783, Watt wrote to Dr. Black, to Priestley himself, and to Mr. Hamilton of Glasgow, that 'he had found out the cause' or interpretation of these remarkable phenomena; and become satisfied that water was not a simple but a composite substance, and that its ingredients were the two airs which have been mentioned, combined in the proper proportions. The precise terms of these announcements we shall afterwards have occasion to cite; but for the present it is enough to remark, that, if they amounted to a true account of the composition of water, the letters containing them (which are all now printed) undoubtedly constitute the very first record and announcement of the fact that is yet known to exist. It may also be observed in passing (though we may recur again to this topic also), that Priestley never pretended to have drawn this

bold conclusion for himself—but always spoke of it as the system or theory of Watt; and, though at one time professing to think it ‘highly probable,’ (for he never got farther,) ended by entirely repudiating it; and died, we rather think, the very last unbeliever in a discovery, to which he was thought at one time to have materially contributed.

In the mean time Watt’s letter to him was copied out, with some slight corrections, on 26th April, 1783, and again transmitted, of that date, to Priestley in London, with a request that it should be laid before the Royal Society, along with a paper of Priestley’s own on ‘Phlogiston, and the apparent conversion of ‘water into air;’ in which some, though apparently but a very few, of the experiments on which Watt had founded his conclusion were detailed. This letter was accordingly received by Priestley, who ‘after showing it to several members of the Society,’ delivered it to Sir Joseph Banks, their respected president: But it was not publicly read till the year after, in consequence of a request to that effect from Watt, who wished to verify some of his observations by farther experiments. But it is stated, in the note printed along with it in the Transactions, that it remained in the hands of the president, and of course accessible to the Fellows, till it was finally read, as a separate paper, at a meeting held on 22d April, 1784.

Hitherto, all the dates—and it is needless to say of what vital importance they are in such a question as this—are precisely ascertained; and all the facts incontrovertibly established by extant contemporary documents. But we come now to occurrences, the dates of which are comparatively vague and indefinite, and the evidence, to say the least of it, of less absolute authority. We refer to the statements (already cited) in Blagden’s letter to Crell, that ‘in the spring of 1783,’ and ‘about the time’ when news of Watt’s conclusion had come to London, and ‘recently before’ he himself went to Paris, (all we know of which is, that he was there several days before 24th June,) Cavendish mentioned verbally, and apparently for the first time, to him, and some other ‘particular friends,’ (not named,) that he had performed the experiments already referred to; and also drawn from them a conclusion similar to Watt’s, as to the composite nature and actual ingredients of water; though it is not said that he then stated at what time he had drawn that conclusion. It may be necessary hereafter to observe farther upon this evidence; but assuming it to be substantially correct, we have now only to remark, that there is not the slightest indication, or surmise even, in any quarter, that it ever came to Watt’s knowledge; though, before forwarding a fresh copy of his April letter,

along with the supplement addressed to De Luc in the end of November, 1783, it appears that he had heard something of the alleged discoveries of the French academicians, and expressed a strong suspicion (knowing nothing as yet of Blagden's actual communication) that they had, in some way or another, got notice and availed themselves of what he never ceased to consider as his original discovery: But he had obviously at this time no apprehension of a rival at home. At last, however, in January, 1784, Cavendish had read before the Royal Society a long and elaborate paper, in which his experiments are very fully detailed, and the inference, as to the composition of water, substantially drawn—though, we must say, far less confidently and directly than might have been expected from one to whom it had long been familiar. The most remarkable thing of all, however, is, that, while the experiments themselves are anxiously stated to have been all made in 1781 and 1782, it is nowhere set down, or even indirectly intimated, at what time this inference from them was made.

Watt, not then a member of the Society, and busy with his steam engines at Birmingham, heard nothing for some time of this paper; nor, indeed, did it come to the knowledge of his friend De Luc for many weeks after its reading. But on the 1st of March, 1784, that learned person writes, in some perturbation, to his friend, 'Mr. Cavendish has had a long paper read to the Royal Society, on the combustion of the two airs, &c.; I have just read it; and you will be *astonished* at what I shall tell you of it, as soon as I have leisure to write: but the sum is, *that he expounds and adopts your system, word for word, and never mentions your name!*' A few days after, he forwards an abstract of the paper; and concludes some observations on it by saying, that 'it is still *possible*' that Cavendish may not have stolen from him; and that, at all events, it would be prudent, with a view to his pecuniary interests, not to make enemies by saying too much about it; but rather to content himself with carefully authenticating, and putting on record, the actual date of his own discovery, and leaving it to time to do him justice. Watt's answer is too characteristic to be omitted: 'I by no means wish to make any illiberal attack on Mr. Cavendish. It is barely possible that he may have heard nothing of my theory; but, as the Frenchman said, when he found a man in bed with his wife, "*I suspect something!*"

'As to what you say of making myself *des jaloux*, that would weigh little with me; for, were I convinced I had had *foul play*—if I did not assert my right, it would either be from a contempt for the *modicum* of reputation which could result from

‘ such a theory, from the conviction of my own mind that I was  
 ‘ their superior, or from that indolence which makes it easier  
 ‘ to me to bear wrongs than to seek redress. In point of inte-  
 ‘ rest, in so far as connected with money, *that* would be no bar ; for  
 ‘ though I am dependent on the favour of the public, I am not  
 ‘ on Mr. C——, or his friends ; and could despise the united  
 ‘ power of “ *the illustrious house of Cavendish,*” as Mr. Fox calls  
 ‘ them.

‘ You may be surprised to find so much pride in my cha-  
 ‘ racter : and it does not seem very consistent with the diffidence  
 ‘ which attends my conduct in general. But I am diffident,  
 ‘ because I am seldom *certain* that I am in the right ; and  
 ‘ because I pay respect to the opinions of others, where I think  
 ‘ they merit it. At present, *je me sens un peu blessé*. It seems  
 ‘ hard that, in the first attempt I have made to lay anything  
 ‘ before the public, I should be *thus* anticipated.’

He ended, however, by substantially taking his friend’s ad-  
 vice ; and applying to the secretary of the Royal Society to have  
 his original letter to Priestley (of 21st and 26th April, 1783,) read at an early meeting of that body ; expressly stating that  
 ‘ his only reason for wishing this was, to show what his ideas  
 ‘ on the subject were, *at the time it was written.*’ This, as we  
 have already seen, was almost immediately complied with ; and  
 that letter separately read on the 22d April, 1784 ; the sub-  
 sequent communication to De Luc on the same subject being  
 also read on the 29th April, and 10th May following. When  
 these two papers, however, came to be printed, it was suggested  
 by Blagden (lately appointed secretary), that they should be  
 incorporated into one article ; to which Watt, with his habitual  
 facility, at once assented ; and left the whole superintendence of  
 the printing, without even caring to see the proof-sheets, to his  
 correspondent ; but, at the same time, distinctly stipulated that  
 all that was in the original letter of April should be distin-  
 guished by inverted commas in the consolidated publication ;  
 and that a note should be added purporting that ‘ the letter of  
 ‘ April was received by Dr. Priestley in London ; who, *after*  
*showing it to several members of the Royal Society,* delivered it  
 ‘ to Sir Joseph Banks, the president ; with a request that it  
 ‘ might be read at some of the public meetings. But before  
 ‘ that could be complied with, the author, having heard of Dr.  
 ‘ Priestley’s new experiments, begged that the reading might be  
 ‘ delayed. The letter was, therefore, *reserved* till the 22d of  
 ‘ April last, when it was read before the Society.’ All this was  
 accordingly done ; and the paper, with this note annexed, finally  
 committed to the press in August 1784 ; and at the same time  
 with the analogous communication of Cavendish.

These two rival papers, accordingly, now stand amicably together, and with the right dates, in the seventy-fourth volume of the Transactions: But in the separate copies which were previously issued for circulation among the Fellows, and the friends of the authors, there was an unlucky *interchange* of these dates—Cavendish's paper being there stated as read (there being no date of writing) on the 15th January, 1783, instead of 1784; and Watt's letter to De Luc (embodying the prior one to Priestley) as of the 30th November, 1784, instead of 1783. A brother journalist, we observe ('North British Review' for November, 1846), is of opinion that this palpable blunder was truly occasioned by a dishonest attempt on the part of Blagden to give an unfair advantage to his friend Cavendish. But we must say that we see no grounds for imputing so unworthy, and so shallow a device to these respectable individuals—though we can well understand that, when it first came to Watt's knowledge, he must have heartily repented having left the correction of the press to any hands but his own. Though he notices the blunder, however, in a letter to De Luc in June, 1786, he never appears to have made any public reclamation on the subject; and seems, indeed, after having thus registered his claim, to have given way to his natural dislike of wrangling and controversy, and been contented to abide the final award of the judicious, upon a matter as to which we have already seen that he was at the time, and now learn, from the unimpeachable testimony of his son, that he *always remained*, far enough from being indifferent.

In the interesting letter of the present Mr. James Watt, prefixed to Mr. Muirhead's publication, he states that, 'whenever the theory of the composition of water was spoken of in presence of my father, he *calmly, but uniformly, sustained his claim to the discovery.*' But when urged to expose any misrepresentations that had been published in regard to it, answered that 'he thought he had done enough by putting his case on record, in his papers and note in the Philosophical Transactions, and should leave posterity to decide.' He had matters, indeed, if not of higher interest, at least of more immediate urgency, to attend to; and, accordingly, after carefully collecting, docketing, and laying aside the whole of his correspondence on the subject up to 1786, he appears to have returned very contentedly to complete his magnificent improvements on the steam engine, and to have concerned himself but little about the fate of this, his still greater achievement in chemistry. Cavendish, in like manner—and, it may be, from the same reasons—seems to have been equally willing to leave his case, as it stood, to the umpirage of coming time; and never, in so far as we know, made

any answer to the statements in Watt's papers: and it is a satisfaction to know, as we now do from the letter already referred to, that these two distinguished individuals soon after became personally acquainted, 'and lived on good terms with each other.'

In the mean time, the great Umpire to whom they had both referred, does not seem to have been in any haste to come to a decision; and the world of science may be said, for a long time, to have accepted the great revelation that had been made to them, without manifesting any extraordinary anxiety to adjust the rival claims of those from whom it had been received. On the Continent indeed, many who ought to have known better, continued to give the whole credit of it to the French academicians; and it is certainly true that, when any English name was associated with theirs, it was far more frequently that of Cavendish than of Watt. But this, we think, is to be accounted for on grounds quite apart from any considerate recognition of the superiority of his claims. In the first place, Cavendish had been far longer and more conspicuously known as a chemist—Watt's reputation being almost exclusively that of an inventive mechanician and engineer. Secondly—and this is far more material—Lavoisier, in the scanty and imperfect notice he takes, in his *Memoire*, of Blagden's communication of the English experiments, *gives the name of Cavendish only*, as connected with them, and makes no mention whatever of Watt; though it is certain that he was named by Blagden (perhaps not very willingly) as *in pari casu* in all respects with the other. Finally, the blunder we have already mentioned in the dates of the rival papers, on their first and separate publication, must necessarily have led many to the conclusion that Cavendish's priority was unquestionable; nor will any one be disposed to undervalue the effect of this accident, when he finds that, even in 1808, Cuvier, in his '*Rapport Historique*,' was so far misled by it, as to give that erroneous date, of January 1783, as that of the reading of his paper.

In this country, however, where the interest of the question was greater, and the materials for deciding it more accessible, the suffrages of the wise have been very differently divided; although we must say that, during the joint lives of the parties, no very careful or accurate investigation of its merits can be said to have been undertaken. Cavendish died in 1810, and Watt in 1819; and before the first of those dates, though the merit of the discovery was, perhaps, most frequently assigned to Cavendish, by writers who, for the most part, touched but incidentally on the question, there was yet no want of persons, of at least equal authority, who gave the palm to

Watt. Nicholson, in his 'Chemical Dictionary,' published in 1795, as well as in his earlier translation of 'Fourcroy,' divided the prize between them. But the writer of the excellent article on Water in the third edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' published in 1797, distinctly says that 'Watt appears to have been the first person who formed the 'true theory.' In the annotated edition of Fourcroy, too, by the late Dr. John Thomson of Edinburgh (1798), the very learned editor subjoins this note to his author's citation of Cavendish as the discoverer in virtue of his paper of 1784: — 'It is but justice to add, that the same inference *had been made* by Mr. Watt, and communicated by him in a letter to 'Dr. Priestley, in April, 1783.' In Dr. Thomas Thomson's Chemistry of 1804, and Murray's of 1806, while both are allowed to have been independent discoverers, the priority is distinctly assigned to Watt; and in a very early number of this journal (1803), Lord Brougham, after mentioning the experiments so often referred to, says, with becoming caution, that, 'reasoning from these facts, *some ingenious men, particularly* 'Mr. Watt, had deduced the conclusion that water is a compound of the two airs, deprived of a considerable portion of 'their latent heat.' Sir Humphry Davy, too, in a lecture which his brother supposes to have been written in 1806, thus nicely apportioned the shares of merit due to the two still living competitors: — 'In 1781 Mr. Cavendish, in a process conceived 'with his usual sagacity, and executed with his usual precision, 'showed that when common air and hydrogen were exploded 'together, the product was pure water, exactly corresponding 'in weight to the gas consumed. *And Mr. Watt, reasoning on* 'this experiment, formed the conclusion, that water consisted of 'pure and inflammable air, deprived of much latent heat.' And finally, no less a person than Dalton says, in his 'New System of Chemical Philosophy,' published in 1810, that 'the composition and decomposition of water were now severally ascertained; 'the former by Watt and Cavendish; the latter by Lavoisier and Meusnier.' The names are here put on the same line, — except that Watt's is put first. But in his History of the Royal Society, published only two years later, after mentioning Cavendish's paper of 1784, Dr. Thomas Thomson states more explicitly, 'Mr. Watt had *previously* drawn the same conclusion 'from the experiments of Dr. Priestley and Mr. Warltire.'

So matters stood during the lives of the parties, and while many of the materials for judgment, now before the public, were not accessible to those who took part in the controversy; and, in fact, it was not till after Watt's death in 1819, that any



thing like a complete investigation was possible. On that event, the whole papers and correspondence in his repositories came, of course, into the hands of his only surviving son, the present worthy inheritor of his name; and, upon examination, produced so strong a conviction of the justice of his father's claims, as almost to determine him to make an immediate publication. Before taking this step, however, he naturally thought of consulting his learned friend and neighbour Mr. John Corrie, the President of the Birmingham Philosophical Society; who, after a careful perusal of the documents, concurred entirely in the same view of their import; and in the following summer he again submitted the whole evidence to the deliberate consideration of the late Dr. W. Henry, of Manchester, probably the very highest authority that could then have been referred to on such a subject. The result of his examination is fortunately preserved in a letter from him of June, 1820, of which we cite only this material passage. After stating that he had attentively considered the published papers of Watt and Cavendish, and the other documents left with him, he says, 'It is established beyond all dispute, by a comparison of dates, that your father was the first to interpret rightly the important experiments showing the synthesis of water. The first, too, who had the sagacity to draw the right conclusion from the experiments of Dr. Priestley; and to take that view of the constitution of water, which, up to this time, continues to be received by philosophers as the true one.' As Mr. Harcourt has fallen into some strange mistake as to Dr. Henry's opinion on this subject, and may, perhaps, suggest that he had subsequently seen reason to change that which is here expressed, it may be right to mention, that Dr. Henry not having seen the *originals* of the correspondence when he wrote the letter now cited, the present Mr. Watt took an opportunity of submitting them to him, when on a visit to him in 1836; when they were again carefully gone over, and strongly corroborated his original impression. This fact, which we should readily take on Mr. Watt's own statement (at p. v. of his letter to Muirhead), is fortunately confirmed by a recent letter from his son, Dr. W. C. Henry, which states, 'My father, I distinctly remember, came from his last visit to you, after a full examination of the documentary evidence you then submitted to him, impressed with a clear conviction that Mr. Watt was the first to interpret rightly the experiments of the synthetic formation of water; and must be regarded as the discoverer of the true theory of its composition.'

In the course of the same year Mr. Watt also submitted the documents which had thus satisfied Dr. Henry, to the late Dr.

Hope and to Sir D. Brewster; to whom, as he has most candidly stated, they did not appear so satisfactory. Sir David, however, lived entirely to get over his difficulties; and has lately published an eloquent vindication of Watt's claims; to which little can be objected, but some excess of severity towards Cavendish and Blagden, and some of their supporters. In 1824, Mr. Watt also contributed to the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, then in the course of publication, a most modest, lucid, and temperate statement of his father's claims to this great discovery; which, along with the correspondence in his possession, he submitted to Sir H. Davy in the course of the same year; who appeared very much struck by their contents; and having long cherished (as was most fitting) a deep and sincere veneration for the memory of Cavendish, expressed some concern at the effect their publication would probably produce: But, neither at that time nor at a subsequent meeting in 1826, attempted in any way to dispute the deductions which he admitted them to warrant. For the satisfaction of the captious reader (if we should have any such) it is proper to say that this statement rests entirely on the authority (to us all sufficient) of Mr. Watt himself, in his letter to Mr. Muirhead, already referred to. (p. x.) We come now, however, to still more distinguished testimonies.

In 1833 M. Arago, the Perpetual Secretary of the Academy of Sciences at Paris, was directed by them to prepare an Eloge of Mr. Watt, their late associate, to be enregistered in their archives: and came accordingly to England the year after, to obtain the necessary information. He had previously carefully studied all the published documents relating to the composition of water; and had become satisfied as to Watt's preferable claims to the merit of the discovery; but was so much struck with the additional evidence afforded by the correspondence in the hands of his son, as to request permission to make use of it in drawing up his memoir; and was furnished with full copies accordingly. The Eloge was read before the Academy in December, 1834; and, while it was in the course of publication, Lord Brougham supplied its illustrious author with a most valuable historical note on the progress of the discovery; which was afterwards printed along with it in the *Memoirs of the Institute*, and in the *Annuaire du Bureau de Longitude*, early in 1839. In this eloquent and elaborate production M. Arago magnanimously overrules and sets aside the claims of his illustrious predecessors of the Academy; and pronounces a deliberate and unhesitating award in favour of Watt, as in competition not only with them but with Cavendish; expressing, indeed, not a little surprise, and something like indignation, that his claim

should ever have been contested ; and coming nearer an impeachment of the good faith of his antagonist, than we conceive to be altogether justifiable.

Stimulated probably by these insinuations, the Rev. W. Vernon Harcourt, when called to occupy the chair of the British Scientific Association, on its meeting at Birmingham in August, 1839, was moved to devote a large part of his inaugural address to a strenuous vindication of the claims of Cavendish, and an entire repudiation of those of Watt. We cannot say that, either the scene, or the character which he then filled on it, was very happily chosen for such an exhibition. But the pious zeal which dictated the selection, must, we suppose, be received as its apology ; and may serve also to account for the rashness of some of the assertions, and the piquancy of some of the imputations, with which the performance abounds. And these, of course, soon met with an appropriate return. Mr. J. P. Muirhead, an intimate friend and connexion of Mr. Watt's family, was then about to publish an annotated translation of Arago's *Eloge* ; to which, after seeing this address of Mr. Harcourt, he subjoined a note ; in which the spirit and import of that discourse are animadverted on, in terms of some bitterness, and no great respect : and a similar note was soon afterwards published by Lord Brougham, when reprinting his historical note in the publication of his '*Lives of Men of Literature and Science.*' But the most signal retribution was that which followed on the part of M. Arago and M. Dumas, at a sitting of the Academy of Sciences in January, 1840. In presenting a copy of Mr. Muirhead's translation of the *Eloge* to that learned body, the distinguished secretary announces that he may probably take a fitter opportunity to reply to the unusual language and inexact statements of Mr. Harcourt ; but contents himself, in the meantime, with refuting what he calls one inconceivable assertion of his ; and then gives place to his most learned associate Dumas, who comes forward to state, that ' after attentively considering the arguments of his learned collegue, and having also scrupulously studied the correspondence of the illustrious engineer, as it is preserved at Aston Hall, he *adopts completely, and in all its parts, the account which M. Arago has given of the discovery of the composition of water* ; and, as his opinions upon the point are so conclusively formed, he desires that this statement may be recorded in the journals of this sitting.' And a more authoritative deliverance we suppose will not easily be found in any such register.

Mr. Harcourt, however, was not to be so daunted ; and, after a short pause, returned to the charge, with a Postscript extend-

ing to more than double the size of his original address ; to which was annexed a copious appendix of extracts from the unpublished papers of Cavendish, with elaborate lithographed *fac-similes* of all the entries in his chemical diary relating to the experiments in question ; and, apparently, not satisfied even with this, (or the effect produced by its publication), again took occasion, upon the recent appearance of Lord Brougham's *Lives of Men of Science*, to address that learned lord in a most voluminous expostulatory letter, contained in successive numbers of the *London and Edinburgh Philosophical Journal* for 1846. We may have a word to say to the argument in these papers by and by ; but at present we shall only observe, that, though they certainly display much learning, industry, and acuteness, we do think that, considering the persons against whom he had chosen to match himself, and the mistakes into which he had fallen \*, a tone somewhat less arrogant and dictatorial might have been more becomingly adopted. But we must hasten now to the end

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\* Some of those slips in the earlier papers are partially corrected in the later ; but many considerable ones remain. The most remarkable, perhaps, is that about the late Dr. Henry, to which we have already alluded. He very justly describes him, in his postscript, as a pneumatic chemist of the very highest reputation, and 'one whose knowledge, acuteness, and candour, were such as eminently qualified him to judge on such a question ;' and then proceeds to say, that he had learned from him that the perusal of the (then) unpublished correspondence in Mr. Watt's hands, had made no change in his conviction that Cavendish was to be considered as the first discoverer of the composition of water. We have already seen, from Dr. Henry's own letter (now given *in extenso* by Mr. Muirhead), what was the real conviction of this most competent judge ; and, notwithstanding the somewhat unworthy cavils in which Mr. Harcourt indulges (in the very close of his letter to Lord Brougham), as to his having seen only an *abstract* and not an *extract* from the corroborative letter of Dr. Henry's son, and even on the necessity of seeing *the whole* of that letter, we scarcely imagine that he will *now* hesitate to acknowledge his mistake ; and to admit that he must have misunderstood or miscollected what he supposed he had heard from Dr. Henry. Another uncorrected mistake is, where (in his address) he actually assumes that Watt had derived his later (and probably erroneous) impression, that the inflammable air of his experiments was combined with some water, from Cavendish, because this does not appear in his first letter of April, but only in the continuation of it in *Nov. 1783* ; 'after,' as Mr. Harcourt is pleased to say — 'after the publication of "Cavendish's theory," which theory was not disclosed to the Society itself till *January, 1784*, nor *published*, so as to reach Watt, till August thereafter.' We might multiply instances of this sort ; but it is the part of our task in which we have the least pleasure.

of this mere muster of the forces. Berzelius, the great chemist of Sweden, ranged himself on the side of Watt, in 1841 (as Brande had done before in 1834), while a Quarterly Reviewer, that distinguished mathematician, Dr. Peacock, Dean of Ely, follows in Mr. Harcourt's footsteps in 1846; and the learned Master of Trinity College, in a brief note to the new edition of his *History of the Inductive Philosophy*, professes his adherence to the same views. But the fate of the battle is probably to be decided by a force hitherto kept in reserve.

Mr. Watt, we now learn, had long contemplated the publication of his father's correspondence on this subject, together with many of his other unpublished papers; but was impeded, first, by the growing pressure of business, and, more lately, by the decay of his sight; so as to have been at last induced to resign this pious office to his learned and intelligent kinsman and friend, Mr. Muirhead; who has discharged himself of it in a way which must have been as gratifying to his principal, as it is undoubtedly creditable to himself, by the publication of the largest of the volumes now before us. This embraces not only the correspondence itself, with an appendix, containing the whole of the original papers read to the Royal Society in 1784, both by Watt and by Cavendish; the original memoirs of Lavoisier and Meusnier in the same year; the subsequent memoir of Monge; Blagden's letter to Crell, the part of M. Arago's Eloge, which relates to this controversy, with the historical note of Lord Brougham, and the notice of MM. Arago and Dumas's reply to Mr. Harcourt in the *Journals of the Academy* of 1846, but also a most interesting letter from the present Mr. Watt to the editor, and a very acute and elaborate dissertation by Mr. Muirhead himself on the whole evidence and bearings of the question. Its only fault, indeed, is, that it is rather too anxious and minute; and comments with an excessive, though not altogether unprovoked asperity, upon the statements of Mr. Harcourt and his reviewer. The last publication of all on the subject is Sir D. Brewster's late review in the '*North British*;' in which, with the whole of Mr. Harcourt's lucubrations before him, he now gives an unhesitating decision in Watt's favour; and sets aside all the reverend gentleman's vehement and erudite argumentations, with as little ceremony as he renounces his own original heresies.

It must have been rather mortifying, we fear, to Mr. Harcourt to meet with such a rebuke from a man of Sir David Brewster's well-earned European reputation. But worse mortifications are behind. In his postscript, and his letter to Lord Brougham, the reverend polemic anticipates, with extraordinary

confidence, the instant conversion of M. M. Arago and Dumas immediately upon their perusal of these performances; and dwells with singular complacency on the admission and retraction of their errors, which he is sure they must hasten to proclaim, as soon as they have perpended his reasonings. It is a pity that expectations so modest should be doomed to disappointment. But the fact is even so. M. M. Arago and Dumas, instead of being converted by Mr. Harcourt, are confirmed and impenitent in their original creed. Since writing the above, we have received the *Comptes Rendus* of the Academy of Sciences for January 1847; and find it there recorded that M. Arago, in presenting a copy of Mr. Muirhead's last publication to that body, not only took occasion to express no very reverent opinion of the '*échafaudage d'arguties, élevé à grande peine, par M. Harcourt Vernon, et ses proneurs,*' but intimated that, though Mr. Watt and Mr. Muirhead had left him but little to do, he felt that he owed it to the memory of the great engineer, still 'to do something to ensure the triumph, in his person, of *the right and the truth*, over the prejudices, the blindness, and the blunders of 'his opponents.' M. Dumas does not seem to have been present on this occasion; and Mr. Harcourt may probably be consoling himself with the hope, that the great chemist, at all events, has been touched by his arguments, and has no longer courage to range himself by the side of his rash associate. It is cruel, we confess, to dispel so pleasing a vision, and rout this forlorn hope. But we are pledged to a stern duty; and have, therefore, to announce, that *we are authorised, by M. Dumas himself*, who is now in this country on an important mission from his government, to state, 'that he has only been confirmed in 'the opinion which he put upon record nearly seven years ago,' by the consideration of Mr. Harcourt's publications, and the review of the whole question to which he was thus led. We are permitted also, we believe, to mention, that having lately been persuaded to undertake a full account of the life and discoveries of Lavoisier, he has been put in possession of all his original manuscripts and correspondence on the subject of the composition of water, and has found in the study of them strong additional reasons for awarding the whole glory of that great discovery to Watt. We should be more sorry for Mr. Harcourt, in making this annunciation, if he had shown a less unbounded confidence in his own reasonings and powers of refutation; as it is, we can only hope that he may at length profit by the rebukes he has drawn down on himself; and, that if he should take the field again, he will at least avoid the error of ushering in his defeat by a song of triumph. We have reason to know, too, that

Lord Brougham, for whose conversion he has taken such laudable pains, is just as heretical and as impenitent as the academicians of Paris; though he cannot fail to be grateful for the concern the worthy Canon feels at his having exposed himself; and, perhaps, even thinks that there may be as good reason for some kind friend's exhorting *him* to stick to his theology, as the other can have had for counselling him to keep to his law. But we gladly turn away from these idle personalities.

After this long deduction of facts and authorities, it may appear that it should be easy to come to a conclusion; and certainly, if it were a question to be ruled by authority, the decision would not be difficult. Since, looking only to the opinions delivered since the materials for judgment were completed, we find on one side the names of Henry, Brande, Davy, Brougham, Brewster, Arago, Dumas, and Berzelius; and on the other, those only of Harcourt, Peacock, and Whewell. But, let the chemists say what they will, it is *not* a question of science or authority half so much as of Logic and Evidence; and if we did not think it one which might be fairly left to the judgment of educated men, with but a moderate reference to a few admitted facts and principles of chemistry, we should scarcely have presumed to judge of it for ourselves,—and certainly should never have thought of submitting it to the judgment of our general readers. As it is, however, we do presume to say, that upon the evidence now before us, we confidently expect to satisfy all who will take the trouble to follow us, of the truth of these three propositions:—1st. That whatever Watt propounded as a theory or discovery in 1783, was truly an original theory or discovery of his own, and not borrowed from or suggested by any other person; 2d. That what he did then propound and announce was, in terms and in substance, the true theory of the composition of water, as it is now received and understood; and, 3d. That he was the first to announce that theory. All those propositions, it will be understood, are controverted, more or less, by the favourers of Cavendish; but we shall have no great difficulty, we think, in establishing the whole of them,—though the second may require some range of elucidation. But after these are settled, there will still remain the more doubtful and embarrassing question, whether Cavendish also was an independent and *earlier* discoverer? or, whether he was in doubt and perplexity as to the conclusion to be drawn from his own experiments, till enlightened and encouraged by the clear and confident announcements of Watt? Upon this question we are far from expecting such an entire concurrence of opinion, as we cannot help anticipating on the others; and, while we should

ourselves be most gratified by the ultimate preponderance of that which did most honour to Cavendish, we are bound to say that the present leaning of our convictions is in the opposite direction; though in a way which we trust will be found to imply no impeachment of his good faith or honour.

And with reference to this last observation, and before going to the proof at all, we think it necessary to say, that we can by no means adopt those narrow and jealous canons of evidence, derived from the rigid maxims of law, or the precedents in cases of Patent, by which both M. Arago and Sir D. Brewster seem anxious to limit the inquiry. Courts of law must proceed upon inflexible rules, and can make no distinction of persons; and are forced, therefore, peremptorily to reject all evidence proceeding from the parties concerned, or from those having interest in the issue; though it is certain that by so doing they must occasionally decide against the truth, and the conviction of all unprofessional observers. The question in a court of law, in short, is never really what the truth of the case is, according to the actual and conscientious belief of the judges (or jury), after considering every atom of producible evidence that is in existence, but merely what the import is of the evidence that is *legally admissible*. But in a case like the present, where the only judge and jury is the intelligent public, and where there is neither any motive for excluding *any* proof which can at all affect the ultimate conviction of that multitudinous tribunal, nor any power by which the parties and their advocates can be restrained or limited in the production of it, it would, evidently, be mere affectation and absurdity in those who may assume the office of summing up for their assistance, to leave out of view any thing that is so produced, or producible; or to pretend to shut their eyes upon those parts of the evidence which, though strictly inadmissible in a court of law, they yet know to be producing and *to be entitled to produce*, the greatest possible effect upon the honest and intelligent minds from which the decision must proceed. In all questions before the public, in short, *no evidence is inadmissible*; nor can there ever be any question, except as to *the credit* to which it is entitled: While the court is always open for as many appeals and new trials as the parties may choose to venture on.

The analogy of the law of Patents is still more palpably inapplicable. A patentee gets his monopoly as a reward for being the first *to make the public participant* of an useful discovery; and therefore it is most just that he should not be excluded from this reward by any rival claimant, who only offers to prove that he had previously made the same discovery, but admits



that he had never disclosed it. But where the competition is merely for the intellectual glory of the discovery itself, it is plain that no such principle can apply ; and that the palm of priority in the invention may be justly awarded to one who has been forestalled in the publication ; while that of original and independent invention may be shared between both. Where there is any doubt, however, as to the priority of actual discovery, it is obvious that the priority of announcement may often be of the most decisive importance ; and perhaps this is all that M. Arago really meant when he said, 'It would not be too much to require that the historiographers of science should follow the example of courts of law ; and admit no titles but such as were in writing, or perhaps even such only, as were *'registered.'*' But in the literal sense of this requirement, we certainly cannot acquiesce.

At all events, we are clear, for our own parts, that proofs of prior discovery are available, though not disclosed at the time ; and also that the evidence of the discoverers themselves is always to be received ; and such effect given to it as the known character of the individuals and the circumstances of the case may require. And, accordingly, in this particular case, we do not hesitate to say, that if Cavendish had any where distinctly and positively stated that he had fully drawn his conclusions as to the composition and ingredients of water, before the dates of Watt's first letters, in spring 1783, we should have required no further evidence of the fact ; but at once admitted him to the honours of an original and a prior discoverer. Nay, if Sir C. Blagden had clearly and expressly stated that the verbal communication which he says Cavendish made of this discovery to him and other members of the Society, was certainly so made before he or they had heard any thing of a similar communication on the part of Watt, we should not have hesitated to say that the merit of the *first disclosure*, as well as of the first discovery, was well proved to lie with Cavendish. And this we should have done, not from any romantic strain of liberality towards these individuals, or from any forgetfulness of the sound canons of evidence, but simply because *we could not ourselves have helped believing* statements so made by such persons ; and because we must have felt that they would be believed by all those whose judgments in any case we could either wish or care to influence. And would they not have been most worthy of belief ? The higher elements of our nature are not so discordantly blended within us, as that the love of honourable fame should lead to the disregard of truth and honesty. But Cavendish was almost as remarkable for his indifference to fame, as for the high principle

and honour that belonged to his station and his character; and it would have been strange indeed, if, for the sake of adding one more to his many intellectual triumphs, he had stooped, by a deliberate falsehood, to the very lowest depths of moral degradation. Nor have we any reason to think that his friend Blagden, who had not even the temptation of a rival claim to mislead him, would have stooped to such a baseness. But the painful part of the case is, that neither of these honourable persons makes such a statement as we have specified—or any thing like it. But, on the contrary, both appear rather to have evaded, or, at least, purposely avoided it, in circumstances where they seemed called on to make it, if it could have been made with truth.

In the case of Watt, however, there is, at all events, no want of such a precise statement: And, on the principles already explained, we see no occasion to go beyond that statement for proof of our first proposition,—as to the absolute originality of the discovery announced by him in April, 1783. And it is not only certain that he always claimed it as his own, but, considering the singularly modest and unboastful disposition of the man, it is really marvellous how frequently, and with what complacency, he dwells upon and brings it forward. His language throughout is, ‘Dr. Priestley has made certain experiments, and *I have found out what they mean*,—or have founded a theory on ‘them.’ Thus, in his letter to Black, of 21st April, he says, ‘Dr. Priestley has made more experiments, &c., and *I believe I have found out the cause*,—which I have put in the form of a ‘letter to him, to be read at the Royal Society.’ And then, after mentioning the experiments, he adds, ‘Are we not, then, ‘authorised to conclude *that water is composed of dephlogisticated and inflammable air*, deprived of part of their latent ‘heat?’ (Muirhead’s Correspondence, pp. 18, 19.) To Mr. G. Hamilton, in like manner, he writes on the day after (April 22.), ‘Dr. Priestley has made many discoveries lately as to the conversion of water into air; and *I have, from them, made out what water is made of, and what air is made of*,’ &c. And, again, in writing to Smeaton, on 27th April, ‘By the help of ‘Dr. Priestley’s discoveries *I have attempted to demolish two of the most ancient elements*—*air and water*. For particulars I ‘refer you to a letter of mine to Dr. P., which he is to read to ‘the Royal Society.’ To De Luc, in the same manner, on the 26th, — ‘You will have seen Dr. P. by this time, and heard the ‘account of his discoveries in the *air way*; and of my attempt to ‘give a reason, or theory, for the conversion of water into air. I ‘shall just mention *what I attempt to prove from his experiments viz. (inter alia)*—*that water is composed of pure air, deprived of*

' *part of its latent heat, and united to phlogiston,*' &c. And, still more emphatically, to Mr. Fry, of the 28th April, ' *Dr. P. converts water into air, and air into water ; and I have found out the reason of all these wonders ; and also what air is made of, and what water is made of : For they are not simple elements.*' And then he gives a receipt for making both these compounds, which could not well be mended at the present day.

There can be no doubt, in short, that, from the very first, he openly claimed this discovery as his own ; and we have already seen in what way he afterwards resented its supposed piracy by others, and the firmness with which he continued to assert it through every period of his life. If he is a credible witness, therefore, there can be no doubt that his testimony must settle the question ; since he could not *possibly* be mistaken, as to his having either formed his conclusions for himself, or borrowed them from another ; and we know not where to look for an insinuation against his credibility. From whom, indeed, could he possibly have borrowed these conclusions ? Lavoisier confessedly did not begin *his* experiments till late in June following, nor admit the conclusions from them till some time after ; and the very earliest date that can be assigned to any revelation of his theory by Cavendish, is in that conversation with Blagden and some other particular friends, in spring, 1783, and 'just about the time' when Watt's account of his views had become an article of scientific news in London. This we shall afterwards show, must have been long subsequent to his formation of that theory at Birmingham ; and, at all events, there is not a vestige of evidence—nor indeed any allegation—that the import of this private conversation was *ever* communicated to Watt ; and much less that it was so communicated before his theory was formed.

The only other person, then, from whom it could have been borrowed was Priestley ; and, accordingly, it has been recently suggested that because Priestley says, in one passage of his paper of April, 1783, that some of the experiments there detailed '*seemed to afford a strong presumption that the air was reconverted into water,*' the theory must be held to have originated with him ; and that all Watt's merit consisted in following up the philosophical and cautious suggestion of his friend, by a rash and confident assertion of his own ! To those who knew any thing of the two men, the surmise must seem merely ludicrous. But it would not be easy, we hope, to find a man of any description, who, after witnessing the experiments of a friend, and being trusted with his theory, or explanation of them, should immediately turn round and claim that theory as his own, in letters addressed to the common

associates and correspondents of both, and actually refer them to the plundered individual for the particulars of what had been so basely appropriated. But even this would be venial and conceivable, compared with what must be believed of Watt, if he had really borrowed his theory from Priestley: For, by far the most decided assertion of his claim to it as his own, is contained in a letter addressed to Priestley himself, and coupled with a request that he would procure it to be read to the Royal Society, under the title of 'Thoughts on the Constituent Parts of Water, and of Dephlogisticated Air, by James Watt, Engineer;' and with this request Priestley at once complies, and enlarges to De Luc on the bold speculation of their engineering friend!

But the whole notion of his having borrowed any part of this theory from Priestley, palpably extravagant as it is in itself, is fortunately contradicted under the hand of Priestley himself; for, within a few days after he had received Watt's paper, having blundered upon a new experiment which he fancied inconsistent with Watt's conclusions, he sends him an account of it (29th April), and says, with that cordial and open-hearted familiarity which gives a charm to their whole correspondence, 'Behold, with surprise and indignation, an apparatus that has utterly ruined *your* beautiful hypothesis!' To which Watt immediately answers, in the same strain of thorough good understanding, 'I deny that your experiment ruins *my* hypothesis: it is not founded on so brittle a basis,' &c.; and afterwards, in the same letter, 'I shall maintain *my* hypothesis until it shall be shown that the water formed after the explosion has some other origin,' &c. When we find, indeed, in the letter in which Priestley transmitted his own paper to Sir Joseph Banks, that he expressly disclaims all pretensions to *theorise* on the facts he communicates, we must be satisfied that he and his friend perfectly understood each other as to the parts which they were respectively to sustain in the investigations with which they had been occupied; and that, in assigning only the experiments and observations to Priestley, and taking the theory or interpretation of them exclusively to himself, in the way we have seen in the preceding extracts, Watt merely followed out the arrangement on which they had previously agreed. Priestley's words in that letter are, 'The principal *facts*, I think, are sufficiently ascertained; though *I do not presume to give any opinion with respect to the theory of them.*' And, in the body of the paper itself, he again says, with more immediate reference to the mutual convertibility of air and water, 'All the *facts* I shall state may be depended on; but it is probable that *different persons may draw different conclusions from them*, and to mere *opinions* I have never been much

‘ attached.’ And, accordingly, when reverting, two years after, to those speculations of 1783, he takes care, in a paper read to the Royal Society in 1785, to give Watt the sole credit of the theory of which we are now speaking ; and accurately to distinguish between his own *experiments*, and the *conclusions* deduced from them by his friend—in exact conformity with that partition of credit, or of labour, which Watt had publicly adopted at the time. ‘ *Mr. Watt*,’ he says, ‘ *then concluded, from some experiments of which I gave an account*, and also from some observations of his own, that water consists of dephlogisticated and inflammable air ; in which Mr. Cavendish and M. Lavoisier concur with him.’ After all this, is it possible to doubt that the expression referred to in another part of the paper, as to the experiments ‘affording a strong presumption’ of the truth of this theory, was never intended to imply that Priestley had himself originated that theory, or even been struck with the force of that presumption ; but only that, after it had been suggested by his friend, he could not but acknowledge that there were some probabilities in its favour. We may now assume, therefore, we think, that Watt was, at all events, an original and independent discoverer of the theory which he propounded in April 1783.

But then comes the graver question—What, in reality, was that theory? And, did it present a true explanation of the nature and composition of water? And this, we fear, may give our readers a little more trouble.

At first sight, however, there would seem to be no difficulty. Watt’s theory, or explanation, as we have seen, is in terms, that ‘water is composed of dephlogisticated and inflammable air,’—or, merely varying the phrase, ‘of dephlogisticated air and phlogiston’—inflammable air being either pure phlogiston, or phlogiston ‘combined with a small quantity of water;’ and both Cavendish’s explanation and Lavoisier’s, which are allowed on all hands to be correct, are expressed in *the very same terms*. Cavendish’s is, that ‘water consists of dephlogisticated air united to phlogiston—and that inflammable air is either pure phlogiston, or water united to phlogiston;’ and Lavoisier’s, that ‘water is composed of vital air (admitted to be the dephlogisticated air of the English) and inflammable air,’—in certain proportions. It may seem difficult therefore to maintain, that these last explanations are right, and that Watt’s is wrong.

But *there is* a colour at least for the objection: Lavoisier distinctly explains, that when he uses the term ‘inflammable air,’ he means only that which is obtained by the oxidation of zinc or iron in diluted mineral acids, and rigorously limits his conclusions to the results of *its* combustion: and Cavendish, though he does not

express, or, as we think, at all contemplate any such limitation, undoubtedly states that the inflammable air, which *he actually used* in his experiments, was of this description. But Watt makes no such statement or explanation; and, as it is certain, on the one hand, that it is only *this* kind of inflammable air (or hydrogen) which does form water by its union with dephlogisticated or vital air (now oxygen); and, on the other, that Priestley, from whose experiments alone Watt draws his conclusions, did not use *this* inflammable air in some of the experiments mentioned in his paper, but air of another sort, obtained by heating *charcoal* in close vessels; so, it is contended, he could not *possibly* have obtained the results, which he (unaccountably) supposed he had obtained, and reported to Watt accordingly; and, consequently, that Watt's conclusions, being founded on an assumption of non-existing and *impossible* facts, or on mere mistake and imagination, can never be received as a true explanation of anything, but must fall to the ground along with the supposititious experiments upon which it was founded. This is now the form of the objection: And, as it is the only point of the case that is not discussed, either by Mr. Muirhead or Sir D. Brewster, and constitutes by far the most plausible ground for questioning Watt's claim to the true theory, we must be excused if we now go into it with some little care and anxiety.

And, first of all, we must be understood as fully admitting the chemical proposition, or fact rather, affirmed by Mr. Harcourt as the basis of this part of his argument, viz., that no air obtained by the application of heat to charcoal could possibly be *wholly* converted into water by its combustion with oxygen; but, on the contrary, that no part of such air could be so converted, except what truly consisted of hydrogen, evolved from the water adhering (though unsuspected) to the charcoal which was burned; and this, we are assured by Mr. Harcourt, would not amount to more than *one fifteenth part* of the gases employed. We do not exactly see where he got that particular proportion. But, resting merely on the admirable experiments of Dr. Henry in 1805, we admit it to be clear, first, that on burning any proportion of this charcoal gas with oxygen, scarcely less than *two-thirds* of the airs must have remained unconverted into fluid—either in their original state, or in that of carbonic acid or carbonic oxide in a gaseous form; and, second, that the small portion of water that might be formed from the carburetted hydrogen evolved in the operation, could not have been *pure water*, but largely impregnated with carbonic acid. It is upon these admissions that we proceed to consider the objection.

We shall have a good deal to say to the *Logic* of it by and by;

but we must first of all demur to the assumption, in *point of fact*, on which it is wholly dependent. That assumption is, that the only experiments from which Watt drew his conclusion were those made with this gas from charcoal, to which Priestley refers in his paper; and it seems admitted, that if Priestley had made, and shown or reported to Watt, other experiments with the proper hydrogen, which might certainly have given the results which he specifies, there would have been nothing to say against the accuracy, any more than against the originality of that conclusion. Now, looking at the whole of the evidence before us, we have come to be satisfied that Priestley *had*, in point of fact, made, and shown or reported to Watt, such other experiments; and that, though it may be somewhat difficult to account for some expressions which he uses in speaking of his charcoal experiments in that paper, it would be *immeasurably more difficult* to believe that there were no other experiments with hydrogen; and that those two gifted individuals were the dupes and victims of an *hallucination*, without parallel or precedent in the history of the human understanding.

We cannot, in short, but believe that there were other experiments made, with hydrogen; and this for a great variety of reasons. First of all, the whole series was professedly entered on as a mere repetition of those of Cavendish, which were made exclusively with that substance; and it seems inconceivable, that when the main object was to test their accuracy, he should not have *begun* at least, with the same materials. But the main proof that he did so begin, is to be found in the details of the experiments which Watt has himself minutely described as those on which his conclusion was founded; and which are far more marked and precise than any which Priestley has given as belonging to his trials with the gas from charcoal. Watt himself, it must be remembered, nowhere says anything of the employment of such a gas; but tells us merely of *certain results* which Priestley had obtained by the combustion of oxygen and 'inflammable air.' — And it is absolutely necessary, therefore, that we should shortly recapitulate what these results were — premising only that there can be no possible doubt that Priestley had actually told him every thing that is thus reported on his authority — since by far the greater part of the details are contained in letters addressed and delivered to *Priestley himself*; and the whole openly read, and afterwards published in the *Philosophical Transactions* — with Priestley's full assent and approbation — it being anxiously and repeatedly set forth in all these letters and publications, that the whole of these details had been derived from his (Priestley's) information, and were given solely upon his credit.

Now, the most material of these details are, First, that as early as March 26. 1783, Priestley had told him that 'he put 'dry dephlogisticated air and dry inflammable air into a close vessel, and fired them by electricity — *that no air remained when both were pure*, but that he found on the sides of the vessel a quantity of *water*, equal in weight to the air consumed.' Now, this is the very experiment, shortly recited, from which, a few weeks after, Watt intimated that he had drawn his famous conclusion; and we have now only to ask whether these results, or *any thing at all like them*, could have been produced if the gas from charcoal, or any thing but hydrogen, had been the inflammable air employed? Secondly, on the 21st April Watt writes to Dr. Black and to Priestley himself, informing the one, and reminding the other, that he (Priestley), after firing the dephlogisticated and inflammable air as above, and opening the close vessel over mercury, found that the mercury rose and filled the vessel 'to within one two hundredth part of its whole contents,' and that there was a quantity of water 'equal, or nearly, to the weight of the whole air employed.' Thirdly, that some time before 28th April Priestley had also told him that, in order to form water, 'you should take of pure 'or dephlogisticated air *one part*, and of phlogiston (or inflammable air) *two parts by measure*, and fire them by the electric spark.' Fourthly, that before 18th May, Priestley had also told him, 'that the water remaining after the explosion is *not in the least acid*.' (Cor. p. 30.) Fifthly, that Priestley had also told him, before the 21st April, that, by heating the *calces* of metals with 'inflammable air,' they were reduced to the metallic state, the air being absorbed (or disappearing) 'so completely, *that only two parts out of one hundred and one, remained at the end of the operation*; from which he had inferred that this 'inflammable air was the thing called phlogiston.' (Cor. p. 19., and Watt's paper, p. 79. M.) Now, it is certain, from the detailed account of this very experiment, given by Priestley himself, in his paper read to the Royal Society, that the inflammable air there used was the *proper hydrogen*: he expressly describing it as 'air extracted from iron by oil of vitriol' (Phil. Trans. vol. 73. p. 402.); and it was *this* inflammable air, therefore, and nothing else, that he and Watt were led by this very experiment to consider as 'the thing called phlogiston.'

But, sixthly, in Watt's own paper, given in to the Society in November, 1783, and subsequently printed in their Transactions, he distinctly states that 'according to Dr. Priestley's experiments, dephlogisticated air unites completely with about 'twice its bulk of the inflammable air from metals — the inflam-



‘ inflammable air being supposed to be *wholly phlogiston*.’ Now, this is a separate and distinct experiment from that in which the *calces* of metals were reduced by the same agent; and is, therefore, a second and additional proof *what sort* of inflammable air both these philosophers considered as identical with *phlogiston*, and on account of what properties they so considered it. It is still more material, however, to observe, that though we now know that water must have been actually formed in *both* these experiments, it was very likely to have escaped observation in the first of them; partly because it could not have been looked for, the chemists of that day being ignorant that oxygen was evolved in the course of it, and believing that the disappearance of the hydrogen, which was truly occasioned by its uniting with the oxygen, and forming water, was owing to its being actually absorbed by the metal; and partly because, the experiment being (apparently) performed over water, the whole of that which was thus produced, would be swept away as soon as it was deposited, by the rising of that at the bottom of the receiver. But in the *second* experiment, where *both* airs had been carefully put together in the *proper proportions for forming water*, and were found to ‘ unite completely,’ or be mutually absorbed, it seems impossible to doubt that the formation of water must have been expected, and consequently observed: and, accordingly, though very briefly recorded, we find that it was so; for, in the very same paragraph, and at the distance of only four lines from the words we have cited, the learned author proceeds: — ‘ Therefore, one ounce of dephlogisticated air will require 120 grains of inflammable air, or phlogiston (that is, unequivocally, of *hydrogen*) ‘ to convert it into water!’ These last words being merely the rendering into the equivalent proportion of *weights*, the proportion of *bulks* set forth at the outset — but, beyond all question, referring to the same substances, and to the same effects of their combination; the import of the whole being, that, as Priestley had found that one *volume* of oxygen *completely united* with two of hydrogen (and of necessity formed water), it therefore followed, from the known relative *weights* of the two airs, that, when the proportion was taken *by weight*, one ounce of oxygen would require 120 grains of hydrogen ‘ to convert it into water’ — that conversion being plainly here taken as a *mere synonyme* for the ‘ complete union,’ or mutual absorption, mentioned at the beginning.

After this statement, can it be seriously doubted that Priestley had effected the complete union of ‘ the inflammable air ‘ from metals’ (or proper hydrogen), with the fitting proportion of oxygen, and formed water by the union? It is quite true

that the whole of this last passage is introduced incidentally in Watt's paper, and that his immediate object in that part of it was to estimate the quantity of *heat* produced by the union of *certain weights* of these and other gases: and it was to facilitate this investigation, and, especially, to enable him to compare the results of his own observations with certain experiments of Lavoisier, that he was induced to end by expressing in *weights* those proportions of the airs employed, which, in reference to the actual course of the experiment, he had begun by specifying in *measures*. But will this at all derogate from the positive statement in *point of fact*—that Priestley had found that one volume of oxygen united completely with two of hydrogen; and, therefore concluded—merely taking the same proportion in weights—that one ounce of the one air, and 120 grains of the other, must have gone into the water produced by their union ?

We have dwelt longer, however, on this last experiment than was at all necessary for our conclusion. For, after the details we have just given, it appears to us that there is no alternative left, but, *either* to believe that Priestley had made the experiments, and obtained the results, from his report of which Watt drew his conclusion; in which case it is agreed, upon all hands, that the inflammable air he used must have been hydrogen, and not a gas from charcoal; or, that the Rev. Doctor must, without any conceivable motive or interest, have imposed on his respected friend a series of the most deliberate falsehoods; and, also, had the effrontery to forward and abet their publication, on his authority, in the face of the gravest assembly in the land. There is no possible escape, we think, from this dilemma,—the case being far beyond help from any supposition of mere carelessness or inaccuracy. If the inflammable air used in the experiments reported to Watt, had been nothing but the gas from heated charcoal described in one part of Priestley's paper, then it is certain that its combustion with any proportion of oxygen must, in the *first* place, have left from a half to two-thirds, or even more, of the airs in their original gaseous form, and unconverted into liquid of any kind; and, secondly, that the liquid produced could not have been *pure water*, or anything like it, but water impregnated, probably to the extent of at least half its volume, with carbonic acid or oxide. Yet, he repeatedly tells Watt, and allows him to tell the Royal Society in his name, and in great detail, that on several occasions he had burnt two volumes of inflammable air with one of oxygen, and found that the airs disappeared to *within one two-hundredth part of their original bulk*; and left in their place a quantity of water,

'which was not in the least acid;' and was equal, as near as could be judged, to the weight of the airs consumed.

When the *particularity* of this statement, especially as to the proportion of air left unconsumed, is considered, and the importance attached to this circumstance by both the parties concerned, it is obviously altogether impossible to account for it by any mere hastiness or want of accuracy in the observation. If he had merely said that 'a great part, or proportion,' of the airs had disappeared, some such apology might have been admitted; but it is absolutely excluded by the terms of his actual statement; where, instead of any such loose or vague generality, he distinctly intimates the employment of an apparatus graduated to a *bicentenary* scale, and reports, with perfect confidence and precision, that the quantity of the air which remained was *exactly one two-hundredth part* of its original bulk; the fact being, that if his inflammable air was from charcoal, the residue must have been at *least one-half or two-thirds* of that original bulk. The supposed *mistake*, in short, is just such as a surveyor would make, who, being employed to ascertain the exact height of some object, for scientific purposes, should report it as exactly ten feet four inches, when its real height was upwards of three hundred! And if such a mistake would at once be pronounced *impossible*, we cannot see what other epithet we can apply to that which is here imputed to Priestley. If his inflammable air, however, was that *from the metals*, there is no difficulty in the case; and when we find him dealing familiarly with *that* air, in experiments involving the very same results, and ascribing to it exclusively, an identity with *phlogiston*, it would require some strong reason indeed, to make us doubt that it was actually employed in the experiments now in question. It is, as if we had found out for our surveyor, an object really ten feet four inches in height, in the same locality, and known by the same general name, with that which he was supposed to have so *incredibly* mismeasured.

Upon what ground, then, is it that Mr. Harcourt now requires us to reject this plain and natural explanation, and to believe that the only experiments touching this matter ever made by Priestley, or reported to Watt, were made, not with hydrogen, but with this charcoal gas; and, consequently, that so acute and so truthful a man as Priestley had either made the *impossible* mistake, or been guilty of the *inconceivable* falsehood, of which we have now been speaking? Now, *the only ground* for this strange assumption confessedly is, that, as Priestley had stated in his own paper of 1783, that he had burned this charcoal gas with oxygen, in one or two experiments, instituted, as

we think, for a very limited and peculiar purpose, and Watt's letter was originally intended to have been read about the same time with that paper, so it must be assumed that the only experiments to which Watt refers were those particular experiments.

We have seldom seen, we think, a more rash or unwarranted assumption. Watt himself makes no mention of this charcoal gas; and nowhere refers to this paper of Priestley's as containing the experiments on which he proceeded; but states *these* for himself, in very minute and particular detail. There is not an atom of evidence, indeed, to show that before writing his letter he had ever seen this paper; which was not read in London till 25th May, 1783, nor printed till the very end of that year; and we think it by far most probable that he knew nothing of its particular contents till after that publication. It is a great and fundamental mistake also, to suppose that the main object and subject of *that* paper was the same, or even very much connected with that of Watt's letter. Its first and longest division consists of a dissertation on the nature of 'Phlogiston' generally; and the other, on 'the supposed convertibility of water into air;' by which he explains, he means into the common air of the atmosphere. Almost the whole of the experiments detailed in it, accordingly, are referable to this *analytical* process; and there is but a slight notice, extending in all to little more than a page, of the *synthetical* proceedings of Cavendish, and the few experiments he had himself made in connection with them; not so much, we think, to test or confirm the general results reported by Cavendish, as to eliminate one particular source of possible error. Watt's letter, on the other hand, professed only to embody his own 'thoughts on the constituent parts of water;' and had, therefore, no material bearing on the general disquisition of Priestley's. He had plainly received a full and complete account of all the experiments on which his own conclusions were founded, some time before the 26th of March; and therefore before either his own letter, or Priestley's paper of 21st April, were written; and had no occasion, therefore, to look to that paper, or concern himself about its contents, in order to prepare that exposition of his important theory, which he then proposed to make public. He had, of course, long before, communicated largely with his learned friend and neighbour on the nature of that theory; and made himself minutely acquainted with every material particular of the experiments on the faith of which it was grounded; and our own firm conviction is, that he had been distinctly told, and told truly, that all those experiments in which the quantity of missing air was carefully measured, and the freedom of the water produced from acid, ascertained, were made with the *inflammable air from the*

*metals*, or the *hydrogen* of our modern technology ; and that, if any mention at all was made between them of the employment, in later experiments, of the gas from charcoal, it was only for the purpose of showing that the (supposed) *perfect dryness* of that air did not interfere with the general success of the processes. And, that this was truly the course of the experiments, and the sole object of those with the charcoal gas, we think is substantially proved by Priestley's own account of those last experiments.

From that account, we think, it may plainly be gathered that he *had begun*, as was most natural, by repeating Cavendish's experiments with the same materials which that great chemist had employed, and had obtained the same results, from the combustion of the proper proportions of the inflammable air from metals with oxygen ; and that it was in these first experiments that he found the airs disappearing to within one two-hundredth part of their bulk, and the water produced free from any mixture of acid ; and gave an account accordingly of these results to Watt—though he did not again detail them in his own subsequent paper to the Royal Society. But after completing this repetition of Cavendish's experiments—with more success, it appears, than Cavendish himself—it seems to have occurred to him, that if he only used inflammable air which had been got from diluted acids, and been received over water, the quantity of that fluid, obtained from it after combustion with oxygen, might be alleged to have been dissolved or suspended in it from the beginning ; and not actually *formed* by the combustion, but only *deposited* in consequence of it. And, in order to test the value of this suggestion, he appears to have bethought him of trying the experiment anew, with air which had never been in contact with water at all ; and accordingly obtained it from what he conceived to be *perfectly dry* charcoal, and received and burned it over mercury ; and finding that water was still produced by the combustion, he was confirmed in his faith, whatever it was, in his former experiments. That he had made such former experiments, and that this was the sole object of this variation in the form of them, is apparent, we think, from his own distinct account of it. 'In order to be sure,' he says, 'that the water I might find in the air was really a constituent part of it, *and not what it might have imbibed*, in or after its formation, I made a quantity of both dephlogisticated and inflammable air in such a manner, as that neither of them should *ever* come into contact with water, and received them, as they were produced, over mercury ; the former from nitre (long after the water of chrySTALLISATION had come over), *and the latter from perfectly made charcoal*. These two kinds of air I decomposed by firing them together

‘ by the electric explosion, and found a *manifest deposition of water*, to appearance, in the same quantity as *if both the kinds of air had been previously confined by water* :’ These last words are of importance, as clearly showing that he had previously employed airs obtained from watery solutions, and first collected over water, in similar experiments; and was quite familiar with the results of such experiments. But the material thing is, that there is no statement *here* of the disappearance of the airs to within one two-hundredth part, or any other proportion of their original bulk,—no statement, even, of the relative quantities of each exposed to the combustion—no statement as to the purity or acid condition of the water produced, and no measurement or examination of the air left after the explosion. All those things, however, he had previously stated to Watt, with peculiar and almost ostentatious minuteness; as the results of experiments, on which, and on these particular results, he knew that Watt had constructed a theory; and soon afterwards read with approbation, and gave in to the Royal Society, that letter of Watt’s to him, in which all these particulars are recited on his authority, and as the necessary elements of the theory which is there propounded. He could not but know, therefore, that they were most vital and indispensable in any discussion as to the composition of water; and yet he does not say one word in relation to them, in what, we are now required to believe, is the only trustworthy account of the experiments on which Watt really proceeded!

If that account had truly related to those experiments, or been intended to affect the credit, either of Watt’s theory or his *data*, this would have been quite unaccountable. But if it had only the limited object we have now indicated, its nakedness and imperfection in these respects may very well be explained. Priestley implicitly believed, though we now know quite erroneously, that in these last experiments he was operating with perfectly *dry*, or, rather, absolutely *anhydrous* substances; and, therefore, if in the course of them *any air* disappeared, and *any water* was produced, there was the same reason to believe that the airs were converted into water, as if the doubt he proposed to remove from his former more elaborate experiments had never been suggested. If there was *absolutely no water* within his close apparatus when he began his experiment, and *some water* and *less air* was found in it when he ended it, *that* was enough to prove that the water so found had been *formed* and not *deposited*; and the *credit* of the original detailed experiments was equally well established, whether the water now found was pure or impure, and whatever proportion the air remaining after the combustion might bear to the volume originally exposed to it. It is very true, that

if the water was impure and unexamined, and the quantity and quality of the residuary gases unknown, it might remain to some extent doubtful, what were the *particular constituents* or ingredients of the water produced, or their relative proportions: But the cardinal fact that it was *produced*, and not merely *deposited*, would be as irrefragably proved, as if all these things had been ascertained. And it is most material to remark, that in the very slight and superficial notice he here bestows on Cavendish's *synthetical* experiments, Priestley had no occasion, and, with a view to his own *analytic* theories, probably no great inclination, to inquire into the ultimate constituents of water. His great object at this time, and the avowed aim of his paper, was to show, or render it probable, that water might be converted into *atmospheric air*; and the only interest he took in the synthetical process, which he always terms 'the apparent *re-conversion* of air into water,' was best satisfied by merely finding that it afforded a strong probability that airs, or gases, *of one kind or another*, might form water by their combination. For, according to his own cherished views, the airs which might be expected to effect this were, *not* oxygen and inflammable air, but oxygen and phlogisticated air, or azote, the actual and then known constituents of our atmosphere; and, though reporting faithfully to Watt the actual results of his own first experiments, he might not be unwilling to leave it doubtful, on the last, whether charcoal or some other phlogistic body might not enter into the composition. It is very true, also, that though none of the particulars above mentioned are stated in Priestley's account of this experiment, he does say, generally, that the water produced had, 'as nearly as could be judged, the same weight with the airs decomposed.' But as we are not at all informed what proportion of the whole airs employed *was* decomposed, the statement is really of no importance; and could not, indeed, be otherwise than true, if, as Priestley certainly supposed, there was no water in any of his ingredients, and *some* air was missing, and *some* water present at the end, while the weight of the whole apparatus was unchanged: And, on the whole, therefore, we think we are fully justified in saying, that there is nothing in this account of the experiments with charcoal gas which can detract from the evidence we have already brought, of the existence of other experiments with hydrogen; and the truth of that account of *their* results, upon which, undoubtedly, Watt exclusively founded his conclusion—a conclusion which, if that account was true, is now admitted to have been as correct as it was original.

But though we think it thus clear that Watt, in point of fact,

proceeded upon real experiments with hydrogen, and a true report of them by Priestley, we do not wish to dissemble that his views of the grounds of that conclusion, and the nature of his great discovery, were somewhat obscured and embarrassed by his unlucky adhesion, along with Black, Kirwan, and Cavendish himself, not only to the phraseology, but the mystical doctrine of the Phlogistic school. We admit, too, that in consequence of this he, as well as Priestley, and the still more eminent men we have named, were contented to be substantially ignorant of the nature and composition of the different inflammable airs with which they were acquainted; and, probably, believed, in general, that they were fundamentally the same—being, in fact, but so many embodiments of their wonder-working and all-pervading phlogiston. But it is quite in vain for Mr. Harcourt to represent Cavendish as having in any degree freed himself from the trammels of this bewildering superstition; since nothing can possibly be more certain, than that the real and avowed creed, both of him and of Watt in 1783, was, that water was composed of oxygen and *phlogiston*, and nothing else; these, indeed, being the very terms in which each of them described his discovery, when particularly anxious to do it with precision: and as to Mr. Harcourt's very strange and confident assertion, that, whatever sense others might attach to the word, 'Cavendish's phlogiston' 'was certainly nothing but hydrogen,' we must say that we do not recollect to have met any where with a more rash or unwarrantable allegation. If the words employed by these two great men respectively are looked at, this is far more true of Watt than of Cavendish. For, while Watt says distinctly, in all his original letters from March till November, that the inflammable air with which Priestley reduced the calces of metals (and which we know to have been hydrogen), and 'the inflammable air 'from metals' (which was then its proper appellation), which he found to unite completely with oxygen, is 'phlogiston itself,' or 'the thing called phlogiston,' Cavendish only says, that 'inflammable air is *either* pure phlogiston, as Priestley and 'Kirwan suppose, or *else* water united to phlogiston; the 'last being the most likely.' But their theory of the composition of water is at all points identical. Watt's announcement of it being, that 'water is composed of dephlogisticated air 'and inflammable air, or *phlogiston*, deprived of latent heat;' and Cavendish's, that 'water consists of dephlogisticated air and *phlogiston*;' and, indeed, he has himself expressly recognised this identity, in the addition to his paper, made after Watt's letter had been read to the Society, where he says, 'as Mr. Watt in his 'paper supposes water to consist of dephlogisticated air and *phlo-*



'giston (the precise words of his own definition), deprived of part of their latent heat, whereas I take no notice of the latter circumstance, it may be proper to mention the reason of this apparent difference between us ;' thus distinctly intimating that there was no other difference ; as, indeed, there could not well be, while he was describing Watt's conclusion in the very terms which he had just before employed to express his own.

Nor will this identity be in the least disturbed by Cavendish's holding that some portion of water probably went to the composition of his inflammable air ; while Watt originally maintained that *his* was 'pure phlogiston.' For, first, Watt afterwards fell off from his original orthodoxy, and came to concur in this venial heresy of Cavendish's (though without knowing that it had the sanction of such an authority) ; and secondly, this peculiarity in the views of one or both of them as to the nature or constitution of hydrogen, could not in the least affect the identity of their opinion, as to the water produced by the combustion being composed of oxygen and *phlogiston alone*. For, though that mysterious element might require to be combined with water, in order to assume the gaseous form, and this might even be the only form in which it was known to unite with oxygen, so as to form more water, it is not to be imagined that either of these acute reasoners could ever have intended to say, that this combined and pre-existing water actually entered into the composition of that which was afterwards *formed* ; or, that it was anything but merely *deposited*, when the oxygen entered into combination with the *pure phlogiston* which that water had formerly diluted, and formed *additional water* by the union of these simple substances. If this was a heresy, therefore (as it certainly was, if hydrogen can exist without any mixture of water — which M. Arago thinks not quite certain), it was one in which Cavendish not only had his full share, but, according to Mr. Harcourt, actually led the way ; but, at all events, it did not in the least derogate, either from the substantial truth, or the perfect coincidence of their opinions as to the composition of water — both of them holding positively that it was really composed of oxygen and phlogiston alone ; though they might also say, without much impropriety, that it consisted of oxygen and hydrogen ; inasmuch as they were both satisfied that hydrogen was nothing else but either pure phlogiston, or phlogiston combined with a little water ; and was the only known form in which they could be sure of its uniting with oxygen so as to produce water. There might be a little laxity in leaving this alternative open ; but it did not affect the substance of the discovery ; and, beyond all doubt, was equally chargeable against both the present competitors.

Mr. Harcourt, to be sure, would appear to think otherwise; for on the strength of this very harmless generality, he insists very strenuously that Watt made no distinction between one inflammable air and another, and would as readily have believed water to be formed by the combustion of any of them with oxygen, as of hydrogen; from which he infers, that he cannot be held to have discovered, 'or even understood' the true secret of its composition. The inference, as we have just intimated, appears to us wholly unwarranted. But, in so far as regards Watt's supposed ignorance of the particular difference between hydrogen and other inflammable airs, and the probability of his believing water to be producible from any of them, we do not know that we can conscientiously give a positive contradiction to the impeachment: And, if Mr. Harcourt were now trying to make a case for Lavoisier and his associates, the objection founded on it might require to be answered. But the present competition is only between Watt and Cavendish; and in such a question we cannot but think it enough that it is an objection as applicable at least to the latter as the former. *He also says*, merely that water is composed of oxygen and *phlogiston*; while he is far less confident than Watt as to the absolute or exclusive identity of the inflammable air he employed with *phlogiston*; and as he, too, certainly recognised the existence of *phlogiston* in other inflammable airs, there is precisely the same reason for presuming that he would have admitted their fitness to form water on combustion, as for imputing that latitudinarian opinion to Watt. — But with this very material difference, that, while it is but matter of *conjecture* that Watt (assuming that he had founded his conclusions on experiments with hydrogen) would have admitted, without careful investigation, that gas from charcoal would answer as well, *it is matter of record, under his own hand*, that Cavendish did, in point of fact, make this very admission; and considered the allegation as in itself so very probable, and so conformable to his own general views, as at once to accept it as certain — upon a most vague and imperfect statement, from a quarter which his advocates now say was entitled to very little authority. We allude, now, to those same charcoal gas experiments of Priestley of which we have said so much already, and as to which, in an addition made to his paper after that of Priestley had been printed, he says, that, having mentioned his own experiments to Priestley, 'he, in consequence, made some *'experiments of the same kind, as he relates in a paper now printed in the Transactions;'* thus admitting that experiments with an inflammable gas from charcoal were, *quoad hoc*, to be regarded as *of the same kind* with those made with an inflammable

gas from metals; and, indeed, from what he says immediately after, not only *as* likely, but more likely, to produce pure water than the other. For he proceeds, and concludes the passage as follows: 'It is remarkable that Dr. Priestley *did not find any acid* in the water produced by the combustion: *which might proceed* from his having used a different kind of inflammable air, viz. *that from charcoal*, and, perhaps, used a greater portion of it.' Mr. Harcourt is imprudent enough to refer to this passage; as showing that Cavendish knew that there was a difference between the charcoal gas and hydrogen: And so, no doubt, there must have been, in some respects: But nothing can be so plain as that, in regard to its fitness for being burned into water with oxygen, he considered it as not only as good as that which he had himself employed, but as decidedly better; as at once giving water of a purity which he was not able to attain without a great deal of trouble; as effecting a reduction of the whole airs employed to just one two-hundredth part of their original volume, while he could never make a less residue than one fiftieth; and also, as more completely excluding all doubts as to the general truth of his results, by its superior *dryness*: So that, on the whole, we have little doubt that he rather regretted that it had not been substituted for hydrogen, in his own experiments. But, at all events, there must now be an end, we think, of any attempt to distinguish between *his* imperfect knowledge, and consequent liability to error, and Watt's; since, in everything that relates to their common belief, that water was composed of *oxygen and phlogiston*, and all the perils and imputations to which that belief might expose them, they were manifestly *in pari casu*—or with some advantage on the part of Watt.

We have already said that, with reference to the present competition, we think it immaterial to consider the amount of those perils; or the weight due to an objection that applies equally to both parties; but having also stated that, if advanced on the part of Lavoisier, it might have been entitled to some notice, we are not disposed to take advantage of the late generous concessions of that great chemist's illustrious countrymen, or to leave the just claims of our own fellow-citizens undefended, against what we know is still regarded by some as a plausible attack; and shall venture, therefore, to say a word or two in their vindication.

The objection, then, is, that by neglecting to limit the constituents of water to oxygen and *hydrogen gas*, exclusively, and only defining the latter ingredient as *phlogiston*, they left its true composition in some measure doubtful; and could not have refused to admit that any other inflammable gas might answer the purpose as well. Now, the first question is, whether they were not sub-

stantially right in the doctrines thus imputed to them? And the next, what was the extent and nature of their error, if they were wrong? And as to the first, considering in what sense they are proved to have used the unlucky word *phlogiston*, and by what tests they judged of its presence, and also the actual nature of the inflammable airs with which they were then acquainted, we scarcely think it going too far to say that they were substantially right in their propositions — though unfortunate, no doubt, in the now obsolete phraseology in which they were led to express them. Whatever may have been the notions of the earlier chemists, we know that Kirwan had recently come to satisfy himself and most of his contemporaries, that *phlogiston* might be best defined as the substance or principle by which the *calces* of metals were reduced to their metallic state, and which disappeared and was absorbed (as all then believed) in the course of that operation; and it was undoubtedly by experiments of this kind, in which *hydrogen* was thus employed, and *totally disappeared*, that he convinced Watt and Priestley, and, we think, Cavendish also, that *hydrogen* ‘*was phlogiston itself*,’ ‘*pure phlogiston*,’ or ‘*the thing called phlogiston*,’ — as we have already abundantly seen: And, although it was afterwards suspected that it might also contain a little water, there cannot be the least doubt that all the results, either in reducing the metals, or afterwards in forming the water, were all along ascribed to *the phlogiston alone*; and that if its water was discarded, or found not to exist, all that was predicated of *phlogiston* might, with equal propriety, be predicated of *hydrogen*, as its synonyme, or most familiar embodiment: and if the fact now be, that it contained no water, then, Kirwan’s and Watt’s original conviction that it was *phlogiston* itself, is merely cleared of the temporary doubt that had been thrown on it, and *hydrogen* may fairly be read in every passage of their writings where *phlogiston* now occurs.

And even with regard to the other inflammable airs, as to which it is merely *conjectured* that our philosophers might have been led to admit them to the same prerogatives as *hydrogen*, it is first of all to be observed that, according to their own principles, they could not have been so imposed on, unless it had been credibly testified, or rather (if they were duly cautious), unless they had themselves ascertained, that these gases also could reduce the *calces* of metals, and disappear in the process: And if this *could not happen* to any gas but *hydrogen*, it is plain that there could be no such actual misleading. But the more material thing is, that all the inflammable gases then known were not only held to contain *phlogiston*, but did, in point of fact, *all of them contain hydrogen* — and owed their inflammability entirely

to that circumstance. Even now, we think, there are but two such gases that do not contain it, viz., cyanogen, which was utterly unknown till long after 1783, and carbonic oxyd, which, though it might have presented itself to chemists at an earlier period, had never been recognised as a separate substance, till the experiments of Cruikshanks, in 1801, nor properly investigated till those of Henry, in 1805. Our discoverers of 1783, therefore, would not have committed any great error in thinking it probable that water might be produced by the combustion of the other inflammable airs then known to them, in respect of the phlogiston, otherwise hydrogen, which they were (rightly) believed to contain; and by means of which they *would* all, in point of fact, have produced a certain proportion of water. It is far from certain, therefore, that there was any real error in the supposed laxity of their definition of the second constituent of water.

But if there had been such a laxity, and if, in consequence of it, their definition of the composition of water was not absolutely precise, is it therefore to be held that they had not really made the great discovery they claimed? or not established the grand, startling, and most prolific fact, that Water was now cast down from its old Elemental throne, and ascertained to be a compound of two other substances, which had hitherto ranked in a diverse and alien category? They had, in point of fact, converted two known *aerial* substances into a known *liquid* of equal weight. They had made the one totally to disappear, and called the other into a new existence in its room. They had finally ascertained the exact description of one of these two bodies; which was then, and has ever since been, regarded as a simple and elementary body. The other, Watt at least, originally considered in the same light; and accurately described, under the alternative names of inflammable air, or phlogiston, as the body which disappeared in reducing the calces of metals, and which he and Kirwan had ascertained to be identical with the inflammable gas from metallic solutions, and to unite completely and be entirely absorbed in one half of its bulk of oxygen: And, though he afterwards thought it probable, as Cavendish seems to have done from the beginning, that in the form in which he obtained it, there might be some mixture of water, neither he nor his competitor ever departed or varied from any particle of this plain description, or left it possible for any one to doubt what this second ingredient of water actually was, and by what tests it might always be distinguished. At the very worst, therefore, their definition was loose only in so far as it seemed to admit of an alternative in the ultimate denomination which should

be given to that second ingredient. It was hydrogen and nothing else, if hydrogen contained no water, and was consequently the *pure* phlogiston; but if it did contain water, then it was that phlogiston which was so largely combined with that water; and which might, perhaps, be detected and recognised in other combinations, by the clear and infallible *criteria* to which we have just adverted.

There is nothing whatever, therefore, as it appears to us, in this supposed objection to the precision or absolute completeness of Watt's announcement of his discovery; and though it may be true that, after hydrogen was proved (or supposed proved) to contain no water, and the name and nature of phlogiston had ceased to perplex mankind, the terms of that announcement were simplified and abridged, there is evidently nothing in this that can at all detract from the merit of his grand achievement.

Take an analogous case in any of the other sciences. The studious observer and bold reasoner who first made out that our earth was a globe, achieved, we must take leave to think, a great and magnificent discovery. But could it derogate from his claim to our admiration, or entitle us to deny that he had, in effect, *ascertained the true figure* of our planet, because it might appear that he did not exactly know whether it was a *spheroid* or a *perfect sphere*? — or even erroneously believed and announced that it was the latter? Is *Newton* to be deprived of the glory of having discovered the true system of the universe, or the composition of light, because later astronomers and philosophers have supplied some of his omissions, restricted some of his generalities, or even imperfectly answered some of his sublime and immortal *Queries*?

These last views, however, are really extrinsic to the present argument; and we trust that, quite independently of them, we have now sufficiently made out that, in spite of Priestley's unlucky charcoal experiments, Watt did, in 1783, substantially discover, and distinctly announce, the true composition of water. We have already somewhat exceeded, we fear, in this exposition; and yet we are tempted to try the patience of our readers by one other, more popular and elementary view of the question; And we are the rather moved to venture on this, from our firm conviction that, if the controversy is not now settled (which we confess we can scarcely hope, while Mr. Harcourt is alive, and a new *Life of Cavendish* in preparation), *this* is the ground upon which the opponents of Watt will hereafter insist on doing battle; and which those who are convinced of the justice of his claims may therefore be excused for wishing to strengthen, with even unnecessary defences. But we hope to secure this par-

ticular position without occupying a great deal of ground ; and propose too, to maintain it by the mere force of plain reasoning from admitted facts — altogether undisturbed by the noise and smoke of that Scientific Enginery which we have been obliged both to employ and to demolish, in the earlier stages of the combat.

We show our confidence, at all events, in its strength, when, in order to possess ourselves of it, we surrender, for the moment, all our other works to the enemy. We are now willing, accordingly, that Mr. Harcourt should assume that Priestley never experimented except with charcoal gas, and had told this distinctly to Watt ; but that he had dreamed dreams and seen visions ! or had purposely imposed on his friend, by detailing to him all the *impossible* results of these experiments, with which we are now so familiar ; and that Watt had given implicit credit to this communication, and upon the faith of it had put his conclusion into the precise form, that *this gas from charcoal* was the true phlogiston, and, along with oxygen, the only constituent of water : — even then, and upon these suppositions, we venture to maintain that, though fundamentally mistaken as to the capacities of this gas, yet, if there was in existence another gas, which did possess, and was known to possess, those very capacities, the conclusion would, in reality, have been just as true and valuable, and the merit of making it as great, as if there had been no mistake in the matter. And this, we think, must be apparent, as soon as it is considered that the conclusion did not rest in any degree on the denomination, internal constitution, or actual properties of the gas which happened to be employed, but solely on the results *said* to have been obtained by its employment ; and that its whole merit consisted in the sagacity and intellectual courage which had interpreted, and deduced *from these results*, an inference which had escaped all other observers, — and was pregnant with consequences of the greatest possible importance. The discovery was, *not* that gas from charcoal, or gas from metals in diluted acid, was, with oxygen, the sole constituent of water, but that *a* gas, or *any* gas which disappeared on the reduction of metallic *calces*, and which, being burnt with half its bulk of oxygen, also disappeared, and was replaced by pure water equal in weight to both airs, *must, by reason of these properties*, be such a constituent ; and that all water, therefore, *must be* a compound, and made up of these ingredients. The names of the gases, or rather of one of them, its actual constitution, or the manner of its preparation, are quite immaterial to the merit or the justice of this conclusion ; and, obviously, could never have been taken into consideration in the course of the intellectual process

through which it was reached. And accordingly, if Priestley, or a more trustworthy reporter, had merely told Watt that he had obtained those particular results by using two well-known gases, which he *neither named nor described*, Watt could have reasoned and concluded as to these *anonymous* substances, just as certainly as if they had been minutely described to him, or as if he had himself seen and assisted at their formation. But if it required no name or description to supply *data* for the reasoning, or give value to the conclusion, why should a mistake of the name, or an unaccountable assignment of the actual properties of one gas to another (which is truly the same thing), have any such effect?

To be sure, if there was no gas in existence which really had the properties in question, and no possibility, therefore, of actually obtaining the results that were stated—if the whole was a mere dream or imagination—the reasoning and conclusion might both be held to have gone very much to waste; though, as a mere hypothetical and prophetic anticipation, we are not prepared to say that they would have been without their value. But, in the case before us, we know, not only that there was a gas with these properties, but that the very results, upon the assumption of which Watt founded his conclusion, had been actually and repeatedly obtained by Cavendish; and if neither Cavendish nor any one else had drawn that conclusion (which for the present we assume), was it not as true and just a conclusion, from the moment it was formed, as if Cavendish and not Priestley had given a true, and not an imaginary account, of the experiments, and had come to Watt for their interpretation? Though the experiments actually reported to him might not have been such as were represented, still *there were experiments* of which that would have been a just representation; and, if the definition of a true theory is that which gives the true explanation of actually existing and known phenomena, how can it be disputed that Watt was, in April 1783, if not before, the author of the true theory which is now the subject of competition?

But, if the actual merit of the discovery is plainly the same, whether the *real facts* explained by it were truly reported as having occurred to the immediate informer or not, we cannot but think it equally plain that the *proper date* of such a discovery must be taken as of the time when it was actually made, upon the belief and assumption of these facts, and not of the time when their reality was afterwards made known. To make this clear, let it only be supposed that Priestley had been experimenting *both* with hydrogen and with the gas from charcoal, and had got the results already specified (as he could only have done) from the use of the former; and that, being at a loss how



to account for these appearances, he had written a full report of them to Watt for his opinion, but, *by mistake*, had described them as having been obtained *by the charcoal gas*, and stated that the experiments with hydrogen had produced nothing remarkable; and that Watt had answered, with the decision of his bold and penetrating genius, ‘ I see you are not aware of the great feat you have been performing. You have, *without knowing it*, completely proved that water is not a simple, but a compound body; and may now go forth and proclaim, upon my authority, that it consists of one part of oxygen and two of the *gas from charcoal*.’ This, we imagine, is pretty much the answer which Mr. Harcourt supposes may really have been made to such a communication — believing, as he does, that Watt held this charcoal gas to be pure phlogiston. But, before adopting his estimate of its value, we must take our hypothetical correspondence a stage farther on; and suppose that Priestley had made the following reply, a week after: — ‘ I thank you for your solution of my difficulties; but it is really so bold and startling, that I cannot bring myself at once to adopt it — though I do not clearly see how it is to be answered. It is right, however, to correct a little mistake I fell into in my last. It was with the *hydrogen gas*, and *not* that from charcoal, that I obtained the results I have mentioned. But that, of course, can make no difference on your conclusion.’

Now, as Mr. Harcourt must admit, that, applied to the true state of facts, though only mentioned in this last letter; the conclusion was a just and correct one, we should like to know *at what date* he would hold that just conclusion to have been drawn? To us it appears that there can be but one answer; and that it must be held to have been drawn, with all the truth and all the merit that could ever belong to it, *at the only time at which it was drawn at all*; viz., immediately on the receipt of the *first* letter, which alone contained the results on which it proceeded, and thus stimulated and gave rise to the only mental effort which the consideration of them ever produced. If there was no true discovery made at that time, then it is plain that none was ever made at all; For the correction of the name of the gas was wholly the work of Priestley; and Watt was entirely passive in all that followed after his original rescript. He might have *died*, indeed, before hearing of that correction; and his merit and claim to the discovery would, notwithstanding, have been just as good as if he had lived to glory in it for a century. It is enough, in short, that he *gave a true and original interpretation of facts which had really been observed*; though in the account of them which had reached him, they were connected with wrong sub-

stances. The soundness of his reasoning was not in the least affected by *that* error; and the magnificent conclusion which he drew from a series of actually existing and well observed phenomena, could lose nothing of its value by his having erroneously supposed that they had occurred in manipulating one sort of materials instead of another. *There*, at all events, was the bold and happy conclusion — ready to be applied to the phenomena in their true connection, on the one hand; and *there* were the true phenomena — ready and waiting for its application, on the other.

But if the matter would be clear in such a case as we have supposed, could it possibly make any difference that the true experiments had been made by Cavendish, and not by Priestley? or not made known to Watt till longer than a week after he had announced his theory? In both cases, the results on which alone the theory was founded, had all of them been correctly ascertained before that true solution of them was proposed; and in both, the author of the solution had all along believed them to exist, though in connection with other substances than those from which they had really been obtained: and this being the case, of what consequence could it be, whether the proof that these were true results, was ultimately furnished by the same person who had occasioned the mistake, or by a different person? or whether it was furnished at the end of a week, or of a year?

To illustrate this we shall venture on one other familiar illustration. Assuming that Cavendish had concluded his experiments in 1781, but without drawing any conclusion, and that Priestley, experimenting only with charcoal, had made the erroneous report, already specified, to Watt in 1783—let us only further suppose that Watt, when consulted as to the interpretation of these wonders, had given the response, and expounded the theory we know of, not in the form of a letter, but at a personal interview with Priestley, *at which Cavendish happened to be present!* Could that learned person have avoided feeling that *his* experiments, too, had then been for the first time interpreted? or hesitated in his own mind to acknowledge that, though applied *in terms* to substances of a different description, the theory then propounded solved all the difficulties, and connected all the phenomena occurring in his observations? or would it have at all affected this conviction, although he had then known that Priestley's charcoal gas *could not* have afforded the results on which Watt proceeded — as long as he also knew that his own hydrogen *had*, in fact, afforded them; and that Watt's theory was a true and original explanation of well-ascertained, and hitherto unexplained, appearances? But we will not be tempted to pursue this course any further. We can see no answer to this last view of the question; nor any

escape from the conclusion to which it leads ; and must, therefore, conclude, that Watt would have been entitled to the credit of having discovered and announced the true theory of the composition of water in April, 1783, even if it were proved that he had believed all Priestley's experiments to have been made with charcoal, and been consequently misled as to the actual results of *those* experiments. It is enough that there were *other* experiments, which verified all his *data*, and justified all his conclusions.

Besides his grand heresy as to the gas from charcoal, Mr. Harcourt indulges largely in what we cannot but consider as mere cavilling, on another topic, which seems to have won almost as much of his favour. Because Watt had long cherished a notion that water, or rather steam, might be made to assume a permanently gaseous form, if it could only be subjected to a very high heat, and had consequently taken an interest in Priestley's endeavours to convert it into atmospheric air, Mr. Harcourt will have it, that it was solely in the hope that it might assist those endeavours, that he first adopted his conclusion as to the actual composition of water ; and that, when discouraged in *that* expectation by a blundering report of Priestley's supposed failure in his object, he had substantially 'laid aside his theory, as not borne out by the facts,' and never afterwards resumed it with any confidence or satisfaction.

From the correspondence already cited, it will be seen how *totally opposite*, the latter part at least, of this representation is to the fact ; how stoutly he maintained, to Priestley himself, that his supposed failure to turn water into air had no tendency to discredit *his* theory of its synthetical composition ; how much he afterwards resented the supposed piracy of that theory by others, and how steadily he asserted his claim to it to the very end of his days. But it may be right to say a word or two of Mr. Harcourt's more radical mistakes, as to this matter.

As early as December, 1782, Watt writes to Black (Corr. p. 6.), that he had long been of opinion, that, if steam could be so compressed as to abide a great heat, 'it would change its state, and become *something else* than steam, or water ; my opinion is, 'that it would *then become air*.'\* The notion, however, though

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\* Mr. Harcourt is pleased, throughout, to treat this as an ignorant fancy of Watt's ; and accordingly thinks he both disables his judgment, and discredits his theory, when he attempts to show that it took its origin in so crude and unscientific a notion. We suppose, however, that he has heard by this time, of those remarkable experiments of Professor Grove, of which an account was given to the British Scientific Association at its meeting of 1846, by which this bold, and yet

plainly much cherished by him, had as yet taken the form only of a very cautious and general anticipation; which would have been equally satisfied, either by finding that water merely passed (as still a proper and simple *element*) into a new, or fourth state, analogous to those it assumes in its three familiar forms, of ice, water, or steam,—or by its *decomposition* into a plurality of known or unknown gases. While his views were in this unsettled and immature state, it is easy to understand with what interest he would listen to Priestley's reports of those multiform experiments by which he thought he had effected the conversion of this most ancient element into atmospheric air—a conversion which necessarily implied that it was a compound, and not a simple body; as Priestley himself had by this time ascertained that the atmosphere consisted of a mixture of *two* separate gases—and had even gone far to determine the proportions in which they met in that compound. Now, it is perfectly true, that it was while watching the progress of these *analytical* researches that Watt's attention was first called, in the beginning of 1783, to those *synthetical* experiments, upon which he founded that great conclusion, to which we think it manifest that he adhered with unwavering firmness, and unabated confidence, through every period of his life; and, therefore, it was quite natural for him to say, in the passage cited by Mr. Harcourt, that 'he had first thought of 'that way of solving the *phenomena*, in endeavouring to account 'for an experiment of Dr. Priestley's, in which water appeared 'to be converted into air.' The *phenomena* here mentioned are, beyond all doubt, those produced by the combustion of oxygen and inflammable air; and the meaning obviously is, that, as

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modest anticipation, was signally and precisely realised. Mr. Grove having actually decomposed steam into its constituent gases by the application of heat alone; effecting this, in one set of experiments, by bringing the steam or water into contact with a surface of platinum raised to a white heat, and in another by merely passing the electric spark through the steam confined in a close vessel. We cannot help regarding this unexpected verification of one of his earliest speculations, as a new and striking proof of the profound and prophetic sagacity of the philosopher of Birmingham; and a well-timed testimony to the value, even of those less matured suggestions of intellects like his, of which men like Mr. Harcourt think it becomes them to speak lightly. We take the account of Mr. Grove's paper from the 'Pharmaceutical Times' for Sept. 1846; but there is an excellent paper on the subject by Dr. Geo. Wilson, in the 'Memoirs of the Chemical Society' for 1847, p. 332., in which that distinguished chemist does not fail to remark on the new lustre which the discovery throws on Watt's ingenuity.

Priestley's former experiments suggested the notion that water might be analysed into two airs of a particular description, it naturally paved the way for the conclusion, that the true explanation of the *later* experiments was, that it was a compound of two airs, though of a description somewhat different. That nothing more than such a general suggestion was intended, must be apparent, we think, on the slightest consideration. For Watt's theory, or 'way of solving the phenomena,' was precisely, that water was compounded of oxygen and hydrogen—or, if Mr. Harcourt likes it better, oxygen and pure phlogiston: But Priestley's *analytical* processes went to show, that it was composed of oxygen and nitrogen; and as it cannot possibly be pretended that Watt ever held that nitrogen was either hydrogen or pure phlogiston, or, in other words, that *the principle of inflammability* was identical with a substance by which flame was instantly *extinguished*, it is palpably absurd to suppose that he could have held the literal verification of *that* analysis, either confirmatory of his own theory, or even in any degree consistent with it. At the same time, he must have been aware, that, if the analytical proof could in any way be reconciled with, or really brought to bear upon the synthetical, the demonstration would be more obviously complete, and the triumph more conspicuous in the eyes of the world: And he would therefore have been very glad, if, by some modification of Priestley's former experiments, such a conclusive confirmation of his own theory and early anticipations, could yet have been obtained. When he heard, therefore, that Priestley had seen reason to doubt the accuracy of those experiments, it was most natural for him to expect that something might come out of a more careful repetition of them, which might supply the corroboration required; and (being quite unaware of any impending competition) thought it well worth while to wait a while, for the chance of being able to offer an analytical, along with this synthetical proof of the true composition of water.

But that his synthetical account was in no other way connected with, or *in any way dependent on*, the analytical, and was originally drawn up with no reference to it, except to *disclaim* all such dependence, is fortunately fully proved by the tenor of that original account in the letter of April, 1783, now embodied in the paper printed in the Transactions. In the passages of that paper, marked by inverted commas, *there is no mention whatever* of Priestley's attempts to convert water into air; and *the only reference* to the analytical process which occurs in it, is the following:—'For many years I had entertained an opinion that air was a modification of water;

‘and this led me to conclude that when a very great degree of heat was necessary for the production of steam, its latent heat would be wholly changed into sensible heat; and that, in such a case, the steam itself might suffer some remarkable change. But I now abandon this opinion, in so far as it relates to the change of water into air—as I think that may be accounted for on better principles.’ (Watt’s paper, MS. p. 85.) Now, this was written on or before the 21st April, 1783—before Priestley had discovered the imperfection of his attempts to convert water into *atmospheric* air, and while this was the only conversion which had ever been submitted to Watt for his consideration: And the plain meaning of the whole passage is, that as such a conversion fell in with his own early impressions, he had, at one time, been disposed to believe in it; but that, having now become satisfied that the real constituents of water were *not* those of the atmosphere, but gases of a different description, he abandoned that opinion, and felt that the identity of water and air must be rested on different assumptions, or, as here expressed, might be accounted for on better principles.

Such, accordingly, were the terms in which he originally wished this letter to be read, in April, 1783; and such were the terms which he left unqualified and unaltered, when he finally renewed his application for its reading; though, in the interval, and while Priestley’s notice of his miscarriage had raised an expectation that an *analysis* might yet be made, not contradictory of his own *synthetic* theory, like that former one—but confirmatory of it—he had directed the reading to be delayed; which, however, on the disappointment of that expectation, ultimately took place, without any change being made. The true analysis, to be sure, though but little expected at the time, came soon after—from the hands of Lavoisier; and *was*, of course, confirmatory of the preceding synthesis. But it was by no means necessary to warrant Watt’s confidence in the conclusion which he had founded on the synthesis alone. Chemical combinations, it is well known, are not like mechanical conjunctions, where whatever is put together may be taken asunder. There are many things, on the contrary, which we can analyse, and yet cannot recompose; and some, which we may compose, and yet be unable to resolve again into their elements. But the composite nature of the substance examined is quite sufficiently and independently established, if *either* the synthesis or analysis is satisfactorily accomplished.

We have seen, then, that Watt was an original discoverer; and that his discovery was clear and complete. And these are, truly, the only things that should affect our estimate of his personal merits, or our sense of the greatness of his genius. The

remaining topics; as to his mere *priority*, touch only his good fortune or his fame; and may be far more shortly discussed. The first is, Was he, at all events, the first to *announce* this discovery? the second, Was he also the first, or even *the only independent discoverer*?

As to the announcement, the chapter needs be very short; For the facts are few, and the inferences obvious. It is certain, from his letter to Hamilton (p. 17. of Cor.), that in March, 1783, Watt had intimated his perfect acquaintance with the whole of the phenomena on which his discovery proceeded; and, from subsequent letters (pp. 18. 20.), that on the 21st and 22d April he distinctly communicated to Black, to Priestley himself, and to Hamilton, the whole particulars of that discovery. On 26th April, that account was sent to Priestley, in London, with instructions to present it to the Royal Society; and was by him accordingly delivered to the president — but not till *after* he had shown and read it ‘to several of the members;’ which must, therefore, have been done within a short time after he received it, and, most probably, about the end of that month or very early in May; which may be taken as the date of its general publication, though there had been separate provincial announcements enough at a still earlier period. Now, there was no such *publication* of Cavendish’s rival claims, till January, 1784; and no written record whatever of his having advanced them, prior to that publication: and the only shade of doubt that can be thrown on Watt’s priority of announcement rests, therefore, *entirely* on Blagden’s report, in his letter to Crell of 1786, of an alleged *verbal* communication by Cavendish to him, and some other ‘particular friends,’ ‘in Spring, 1783;’ and ‘about the time when the news of Watt’s ‘discovery came to London,’ and ‘shortly before’ Blagden went to Paris, in June after, as already noticed. Now we do not at all doubt that some such communication was made; and the whole question is, at what time? — whether before or after Watt’s *publication* of the end of April? — or before or after his separate communications to Black, Hamilton, and Priestley, some time before?

We cannot, of course, take the strange intimation that the two claims were made ‘about the same time’ to signify that they were actually made at the same instant. It is plain enough that *that* could not have been the case. One certainly must have been made before the other; and Blagden *could not but know* which of them was first. That he should have left the matter thus ambiguous seems unaccountable, when the nature of the question at issue is considered — and, we must say, not a little suspicious also, when the relations of the parties are remembered. It is painful

to us to say any thing that may have even the appearance of being invidious towards the memory of a dead man; but it is impossible, on such an occasion, to forget that Blagden was at this time the pensioner and dependent of Cavendish. He had quitted his profession, to act as assistant in his laboratory, and was, in fact, substantially dependent on his friendship and bounty. We do not believe that he would, on this account, have uttered a deliberate falsehood, to favour any interest of his benefactor; and still less that Cavendish would have stooped to suborn such a testimony. But we do not think we show any lack of charity when we say, that if here was any fact within his knowledge, and which plainly lay in his way, by the statement of which his patron would be gratified, or his reputation advanced, it is to us inconceivable that he should have omitted to make that statement. And yet this is the predicament in which he appears to us to stand. It has been said, indeed, that his only object in that letter was to vindicate Cavendish's priority in respect of *Lavoisier*; and that he was not then aware of any possible competition with Watt. But it is plainly impossible to accept that explanation. The mere mention of Watt's name, in the way in which the force of truth—and his consciousness of what was known to 'other particular friends'—compelled him to mention it, at once invested him with the character of a competitor: And when he admitted that the news of Watt's conclusion had come to London about the very same time with the first revelation of Cavendish's, he must have seen that he had already recognised his right, at least to *divide and share* the honour of the discovery with Cavendish; and that it wholly depended on the fact of their *relative* priority which of them was entitled to by far the largest share. That he, the client and partial friend, to say the least, of Cavendish, should have been willing to let their shares *appear equal*, will be conclusive proof, with most people, that he very well knew that a more exact apportionment would have been any thing but favourable to his patron. But it is not the less certain that such an apportionment was due—to truth, to science, and to the parties themselves,—and also that Blagden had the means of making that apportionment; and we fear we must add, that he studiously *evaded* making it! He must have known perfectly whether he had first heard of this conclusion from the one or the other; and if he had first heard it from *Cavendish*, is it possible to doubt that he would have said so? After mentioning the actual communication by that gentleman, it is almost impossible that he should not (in that case) have introduced his notice of Watt's, by saying, 'Soon after this;' or, if it came *very soon*, 'Almost immediately



‘after.’ Even if nothing depended on the priority, this was the natural and almost inevitable way of connecting the two notices, if they had really reached him in that order.

But he could not be ignorant that a great deal depended on it. He could scarcely fail, we think, to have heard of Watt’s early complaints and jealousies of Cavendish, from his own intimate friends, Kirwan and De Luc, with whom he is proved to have been in communication on the subject. But, at all events, he must have been perfectly aware of Watt’s anxiety to fix the precise date, and early reading of his own April letter to Priestley, for the express purpose of showing ‘what his ideas were *at the time it was written* ;’ for this motive is distinctly assigned in a letter to Blagden himself, dated in May 1784, and sent along with the note to the same effect, afterwards printed under Blagden’s exclusive superintendence. Now we know to a certainty from the correspondence with De Luc already cited, that *the only* object of this anxiety was to fix the priority of his own communication of April 1783; to that of Cavendish’s paper of January 1784; and it is not to be imagined that Blagden could be ignorant of the fact. It had been previously spoken out, however, and now stands on record in that *public* letter to Sir Joseph Banks, in which Watt makes *the first application* for having his letters to Priestley of 21st and 26th April, 1783, openly read to the Society. In that letter (of 12th April, 1784), he says, ‘As *similar theories* have since, as I am ‘informed, been *supported by philosophers of first-rate abilities*, ‘I hope, *therefore*, that the Royal Society will excuse my ‘troubling them by now laying before them my letter to Dr. ‘Priestley *unaltered*.’ And then follows the relative explanation to Blagden, of his anxiety to show what his ideas were *at the date of that letter*, and the note inserted for no other purpose than ‘to authenticate *the date* of the author’s ideas.’ With all this before him, is it possible to believe that Blagden did not, in 1786, see the vital importance of settling whether Cavendish’s communication was after or before this carefully verified date of 21st and 26th April, 1783? or that it could possibly be, because he thought it of no consequence, that he chose to represent both communications as coming ‘about the same time?’

It may also be observed, as pointing strongly to the same conclusion, that if Cavendish’s communication was the first, its being followed *so very closely* by Watt’s, as it must have been to justify this expression, cannot but be regarded as one of the most extraordinary and, therefore, improbable coincidences (considering the new and startling nature of the discovery they respectively announced) of which there is any record in the his-

tory of science; whereas, nothing is so natural as their close succession, if Watt be supposed to have had the start. Assuming that Cavendish had actually drawn the same conclusion — or had a vision of it — *in private*, at an earlier period, he must naturally have been startled at the idea of being thus anticipated; and felt, that if he was not already too late for vindicating his own pretensions, he had, at least, no time to lose; and, at all events, would be led instantly to confer on the subject with his confidential assistant, and ‘other particular friends,’ — as he seems accordingly to have done. Upon the actual course and progress of the business, we think Kirwan’s letter to Watt, already referred to, throws very valuable light; and shows, not only that Cavendish had the very earliest information of the import of Watt’s letter to Priestley, but that he was Blagden’s first informer in regard to it. It says, ‘Lavoisier *certainly* learned *your theory* from Dr. Blagden, *who first had it from Mr. Cavendish*; and afterwards from your letter to Priestley, *which he heard read*; and explained the whole minutely to Lavoisier *last July*; and *this he authorised me to tell you.*’ Now the letter to Priestley was not *publicly* read till April 1784, and consequently the reading here mentioned (Kirwan’s letter being dated in Dec. 1783) must have been one of those *private readings* with which we know that Priestley indulged ‘several of the Fellows’ on receiving it, in April 1783, and before first giving it in to the President. But, however early Blagden may have been admitted to such a reading, it is certain, from this distinct statement of Kirwan’s, that *Cavendish* had had still earlier notice of this Birmingham theory; and had been in communication with his friend on the subject, even before the latter had seen the original letter of 21st of April in Priestley’s hands.

But there is one other very obvious view of the case, which seems of itself to be conclusive as to Watt’s priority of announcement. Upon the most favourable view for Cavendish of Blagden’s unaccountable chronology, the two communications were made so nearly at the same time as to be almost indistinguishable in the recollection — on the same day, therefore, we must suppose, or certainly in the course of a few days, or of the same week. If there was a larger interval than *that*, it is absolutely inconceivable that they could have been said to have occurred about the same time. But what is thus represented as contemporaneous, is *the receipt, and rumouring abroad, in London* of Watt’s conclusion, and the very first revelation of his by Cavendish to his particular friends. But this *London* disclosure of Watt’s theory was by no means its first disclosure; having been preceded by written communications at Birmingham, of a

considerably earlier date. The letter which brought it to London was not despatched from Birmingham till 26th April, at the soonest; and we cannot suppose, that through the agency of a stranger in the great city, like Priestley, it could get to be talked about as an article of news, till after the lapse of some little time. It certainly was not then read to any meeting of the Fellows or other learned men; but merely shown severally, and successively, to such of them as came in the way of the possessor. It cannot well be supposed, therefore, to have become thus public before the very end of April, or beginning of May; about which very time we are assured Blagden received from Cavendish, in person, the very first hint of his having formed a similar theory. But at least ten days or a fortnight before this, on 21st of April, Watt had given a full written account of his conclusion to Black, Hamilton, and Priestley. So that if Cavendish's first disclosure of his own, was only made at the same time that Watt's came to be talked of in London, it is manifest that it must have been *posterior* to that very sufficient announcement which Watt had made in Birmingham a considerable time before.

But it is really idle to argue with apparent anxiety upon a point which we feel can now admit of no serious question among reasonable men; and which we are quite willing to leave to the judgment of our readers on the plain and broad ground which we stated at the beginning of this discussion. Blagden, the humble friend and dependent of Cavendish, in a paper professedly written for the purpose of vindicating *his* claim to priority over Lavoisier, and most probably at his suggestion and request, is yet found in every part of it to admit a third party to an equal share of the credit which may be obtained by his success; and to assign to Watt an undivided and indistinguishable moiety of the glory which is thence to accrue — he all the while necessarily and perfectly knowing, that in truth and justice their shares were not, and could not be equal, or any thing like equal; but that one of them must have been distinctly prior to the other, and so entitled to whatever prize might be due to the real winner in that honourable race. After mentioning the first verbal communication from Cavendish, he not only admits, that 'about the same time' it had come to be generally known in London that Watt had made a similar communication from Birmingham, but proceeds to maintain this conjunction and equalisation of the two claims through every part of his statement, making it, for example, the head and front of Lavoisier's offending, that he had suppressed the fact, 'that I had made him acquainted with *Messrs. Cavendish and Watt's conclusions*, viz. that water, and nothing else, arose from the combus-

'tion of these two airs;' and winding up the whole by stating, that Lavoisier had been induced to enter on the experiments which confirmed those conclusions, 'solely by the account he received from me of our *English experiments*; and had really discovered nothing but what I had pointed out to him, as having been previously made out and demonstrated in *England*.' The credit, in short, is throughout studiously claimed for *the firm of Watt and Cavendish*, as equal partners in the English concern. But he well knew that they were not so; and if, to his perfect knowledge, nine-tenths of the credit had really belonged to *Cavendish*, is there any one who considers the relation in which he stood to that party, who can believe that he would not have done him the *justice* of stating it? He did not so state it; and we are, therefore, satisfied, that this overbalance of credit did not belong to Cavendish. But if it did not belong to him, it *must* have belonged to Watt; and all the world, we think, must now be convinced that it did belong to him.

Watt, then, was an original discoverer of the composition of water; and was the first to announce it. Was he also the first to discover it? or was Cavendish before him with the discovery? or a true and independent discoverer at all? On one of these points there is no difficulty. If he was an independent and unassisted discoverer, he was, undoubtedly, a *prior* one; for his claim rests entirely on what he did, or wrote down, in 1781 and 1782; while Watt's theory was not formed till the year after. But there is unfortunately a doubt as to his having ever made any positive or original discovery at all.

The grounds of this doubt have been partly indicated in what we have just said as to the *réticences* of Blagden; but must now be a little further explained. They rest chiefly on the fact that, though as early as 1781 he had completed those experiments from which he *might* have drawn the conclusion which Watt actually drew in April 1783, from similar experiments of Priestley, there is not the slightest indication of it in the full contemporary record which he kept of the experiments themselves; that the very first intimation of it which he is alleged to have made, even to his own assistant and confidential associate, Blagden, was after news had come to London of Watt having formed a similar conclusion; and that, neither on that occasion, nor when it was more formally claimed in the paper read to the Royal Society in January 1784, nor in any of the important additions made to that paper before printing, nor in the letter which Blagden with his consent wrote to Cr  ll in 1786, is there any thing like an assertion that he *had formed the conclusion at the time of making the experiments*, or at any earlier time than that at which the

announcements were actually made. ' It is needless to say what inferences are suggested by these facts: Nor how pregnant they are, though merely negative, with suspicions. Mr. Harcourt meets them by saying, that the experiments so plainly *involved* the conclusion that it was needless to express it; that Cavendish was far too acute to miss what lay so plainly before him; and of a nature too modest and retiring to make it at all wonderful that he should not have proclaimed his discovery on the house-tops, or even glorified himself upon it by a boastful entry in his journal. We shall speak to the leading proposition of this answer presently, but we must first request the attention of the reader to some of the particulars of the facts we have generally indicated.

Look, then, to the circumstances of the first alleged intimation made to Blagden, and other particular friends, early in 1783. We think it certain that it was not made till *after* both Cavendish and Blagden had heard ' the news ' of Watt's earlier disclosure: but, even if this were doubtful, it is at least apparent from the terms in which it is made, that it was *the very first* that Blagden had received. His words are, that Cavendish then ' communicated to me, and other particular friends, the result ' of some experiments, &c., and showed us that out of them *he must draw the conclusion* that water was dephlogisticated air ' united with phlogiston.' These expressions are remarkable: — not that *he had drawn*, but that ' he must draw ; ' that is, according to the plain and natural meaning of the words, that he must *now* draw, or had newly seen that he must draw, that conclusion. But can any other construction of the words at all account for the fact, that *Blagden* had never before heard of such a conclusion? Cavendish was no doubt shy and retiring in society, even to a morbid degree; and by no means eager or impatient in the pursuit even of scientific fame. But if he had one intimate and confidential associate in the world, that associate was Blagden; and we must say that it is to us not merely incredible, but *inconceivable*, that if he had actually made that splendid discovery in 1781, the authorship of which still agitates the learned world at the distance of sixty years, he should have kept, or been able to keep, the secret of it, even from his trusty laboratory assistant, for a period of two whole years — and only revealed it at last ' about the time ' when a less reserved inquirer had already blabbed it to the world! That Blagden, however, had never heard of it till then, is manifest, we think, from the words we have already cited. But this is still more apparent when these words are taken in connection with the introductory sentence of the letter in which they occur, and which they immediately follow. He there says,

'I can certainly give you the best account of the discovery,' &c. ;  
 'The following is a short account of its history. In spring, 1783, Cavendish communicated to me,' &c. ; thus distinctly asserting, first, that he knew better than anybody the *true history of the discovery* ; and then deliberately stating the *communication to himself*, in 1783, as the very first stage of that history of which he had any knowledge.

We are also disposed to think, that there is more in the absolute omission of any notice of this conclusion in the full contemporary journal of the experiments, than Mr. Harcourt is willing to allow. A discovery which has altered the whole course and aspect of the chemical and physiological sciences, might be expected to have obtained a passing notice, at least, in the most meagre and modest record that ever ascetic student preserved of his failures and successes. A very brief and simple entry would have been sufficient. If he had merely subjoined to the account of one of his experiments some such words as these: 'this water, therefore, must have been *formed* by the combination of the two airs, and not merely *deposited*, and, *inde*, water is a compound, and not an element ;' or if he had even stated in the detail of it, that the airs were *converted*, or *changed*, or *turned* into water, it would probably have been enough to have secured to him the credit of the discovery ; as well as to have given the scientific world the benefit of it, in the event of his death before he could prevail on his modesty to claim it in public. That he was not quite so modest, however, or so indifferent to fame as willingly to run these risks, is abundantly certain from the course which he actually pursued. As soon as he hears of Watt's discovery, he immediately calls his friends together and announces his own ; and then sends Blagden to Paris to warn the French chemists off the premises ; and as soon after as possible, comes out with a long paper to the Royal Society, in which he very anxiously vindicates and asserts his own priority to *Lavoisier* ; and notices and admits the rival discovery of Watt, without once insinuating that he is entitled to any such advantage *over him*. The whole tenor of that paper, indeed, we must confess, has impressed us with a strong belief that, though he might have previously contemplated that solution which Watt's genius afterwards so confidently gave of the phenomena, as one of the *possible* modes of accounting for them, he had not, in fact, attained any firm view or settled conviction on the subject, till encouraged and enlightened by that bold revelation—nor even, perhaps, till more fully confirmed in it by the nicer trials, and more expanded reasonings of *Lavoisier*.

Look only to the guarded expressions and singular omissions

of that elaborate paper. Mr. Harcourt's belief is, that the conclusion was simultaneous with the experiments; and there is, in truth, no room for any other view, on his side of the question. And yet, how remarkable is it, that not only is no such thing asserted anywhere in that paper, but that the assertion seems even to be studiously avoided; and expressions used that appear inconsistent with the truth of it, and certainly most unlikely to have been used, if such had been the truth. The words implying the conclusion are nowhere used in the *past tense*, or as referring back to the time of the experiments; but, like those afterwards reported by Blagden to Crell, indicative of a view taken up, or an opinion adopted, on a retrospect of those past experiments, and recently before this announcement of them. The expressions are all of this kind: 'by this experiment,' or, 'from the foregoing experiments, it appears,' that is, according to the natural reading, *it now appears*, to me, writing in January 1784: And so in the other instances: 'From this we may safely conclude,' 'I think we must therefore allow;' and, most remarkably perhaps, in what we may call his final summing up: 'From what has been said *there seems the utmost reason to think* that dephlogisticated air is only water deprived of its phlogiston; and that inflammable air is either phlogisticated water, or else pure phlogiston, but most probably the former.' Is it natural we would ask, or even conceivable, that a man should express himself in this way, as to a conclusion which he had actually drawn, without wavering or hesitation, three years before — and been accustomed for all that time to look back upon as absolutely certain?

But it is still more difficult to reconcile with such a supposition the passages about Lavoisier and Watt, inserted before the paper was printed in August 1784, and *after* he was fully aware of the doctrines maintained, and the pretensions set up, by both these philosophers. With regard to Lavoisier, the statement is clear and satisfactory enough; his *experiments*, he says, were mostly made in 1781, and mentioned to Dr. Priestley (not a word said here of any conclusion being then drawn from them); 'and *during last summer* a friend of mine gave some account of them to M. Lavoisier, as well as of the conclusion drawn (that is, which I had by that time drawn) 'from them, that dephlogisticated air is only water deprived of phlogiston,' &c. The statement, as we have glossed it, is conclusive as to his priority of announcement over Lavoisier; and if he could only have conscientiously extended it to Watt's claim, both to the announcement and the discovery, or either of them, we cannot at all comprehend how he should have

neglected to do so, by a mere continuation of the same passage. That he knew of Watt's pretensions at this time, and even recognised them as valid, is proved by the express notice of them, to which we are about to refer. But it is farther proved, by Kirwan's letter, and the plain implication of Blagden's statement to Croll, that he was fully aware of them from their first announcement in London; and must, therefore, have felt that he had as much (or greater) occasion to assert his own priority as to him, if it could only be truly asserted, as in relation to Lavoisier. Yet he evades making any statement on the subject; and, when he does mention Watt and his theory, it is without the smallest insinuation against either its truth or its *originality*, or the slightest hint that it had been in any respect anticipated by any discovery or announcement of his own — all that he says on the subject of it is in these very remarkable words: 'As Mr. Watt, in a paper lately read before this society, (also) supposes water to consist of dephlogisticated air and phlogiston, deprived of part of their latent heat, whereas I take no notice of the latter circumstance, it may be proper to mention the reason of this apparent difference between us;' and then he proceeds to say, that he does not himself believe in the existence of heat as a separate element, and thinks the notice of it in chemical definitions would be cumbersome, — and so takes a final farewell of the subject! thus distinctly recognising Watt as an original discoverer, and leaving him in unchallenged possession of, at least an equal right with himself, to the honours thereto belonging. As to him, in short, he claims no precedence or priority, of any sort, either as to discovery or announcement; but, knowing perfectly that Watt's paper had been read in London in April 1783, and his own not till January 1784, he yet neither fixes, as in the case of Lavoisier, on any earlier announcement 'in the spring' of that year, nor on any still earlier though undisclosed discovery, by which his own substantial priority might yet be established. All these things he now passes over in safe and submissive silence; though it is difficult to suppose that he should not have seen how that silence was likely to be interpreted. For ourselves, we cannot help adopting the obvious interpretation! nor avoid believing, that, if he could with truth have said, either that he had disclosed his own theory, or even fully formed it, before he had heard of Watt's, he *would certainly have said so* when the occasion was so palpably presented to him; and when he was actually availing himself of it to put down a less formidable competitor.

But all this, Mr. Harcourt assures us, is really of no consequence — for the experiments so obviously *involved* the conclu-



sion, that no man, with his senses about him, could possibly miss it. If the airs all disappeared, and an equal weight of water was found in their place, who could doubt that the airs were converted into the water? and what more would be learned by expressing this in a formal conclusion, than had already been taught by the simple statement of the fact?

Now, we do not deny that there is, at first sight, something plausible and taking in this view of the matter; especially when addressed to a generation which has always been familiar with the conclusion, and with the universal assent of mankind in the sufficiency of the evidence referred to. Yet it requires but a moderate acquaintance with the actual history of the progress, even of the most obvious truths, and of the tenacity and vitality of prejudices and errors, to make us cease to wonder at the incredulity with which what is at last felt to be demonstration, is often at first received\*; or at the distrust with which even the authors of great discoveries have often regarded their own achievements. The truth is, that, in certain circumstances, it requires no common measure of sagacity and moral courage, to enable men to follow the dictates of their reason — or even to trust to the evidence of their senses! When long worshipped idols are to be cast down, the very detectors of the imposture may be seen to shrink on the threshold of the sanctuary: and the very men who delivered the world from its thralldom have sometimes remained in, or even relapsed into, the old idolatry. We of this age can have no notion of the consternation with which the Savans of 1783 must have received the announcement that Water was no longer to be regarded as an element! We doubt whether an alleged transmutation of Lead into Gold would, at the present day, be considered as more incredible. And

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\* To mention but two instances. The discovery of the *valves* in the veins, which were known long before Harvey's time, so obviously *involved* the necessity of the circulation of the blood, that Dr. Wm. Hunter could find no other way of explaining how the announcement of it should have been left to Harvey, than by supposing 'that Providence meant to reserve it for him,' and therefore '*would not let men see what was before their eyes, nor understand what they read.*' (Hunter's Introductory Lectures, p. 42.) Notwithstanding which, Harvey always said, that he never found a physician over fifty years of age, who would give any credit to his discovery. M. Arago thinks that the compound nature of *white light* was as plainly involved in the long known phenomenon of the Prismatic Spectrum; and that the memorable words in which Newton first stated it as a conclusion 'are truly nothing else than a literal description or translation of that familiar experiment.'

yet, if such a discovery as this were now to be actually made, we should like to know how many of our living chemists would listen to the report of it with anything but contemptuous incredulity; or how many would admit or believe in its reality, even after they had rigorously tested the experiments which appeared to establish it, without being able to find a flaw? The general impression, we think, would still be, that *there must be a mistake somewhere*, though it had not yet been detected; and the arrogant would scoff, and the thoughtful suspend their judgment accordingly. If the substances operated on were very small in quantity, we have not the least doubt that *this* would be the first fate of the discovery; and are firmly persuaded, that there would be no general acknowledgment of its truth, till the happy discoverer had repeatedly produced good ringing and well weighing pieces of the precious metal, from an apparatus which jealous spectators had seen charged with an equal weight of the baser material.

Now we think it well established by contemporary writings, that Watt's first announcement was actually met with just such a spirit of unbelief. De Luc writes at the time, that the Fellows who had heard his paper privately read, were generally disposed to *laugh at the idea* of such a discovery, and said it would prove another story of *the golden tooth*! They did not at all question the truth of the experiments. They merely could not stomach the conclusion. Watt himself, too, apologises in all his letters for what he fears will be considered as the excessive boldness of his suggestions; and has left it on record in that addressed to Sir Joseph Banks, that his chief reason for wishing to withdraw his paper for a while, was, that he understood his theory had been thought too bold to be propounded without more elucidation. But the case does not rest on these general indications: as there happen to be many conspicuous examples of what Mr. Harcourt is pleased to think impossible—the actual repudiation of Cavendish's supposed conclusion by those who fully admitted the truth of his experiments.

The single case of Priestley, to which we have already adverted, might, indeed, be sufficient for our purpose. He repeated these very experiments; and, as we have already seen, with more than their original success; and it was upon his report of them, that Watt actually founded his conclusion. Yet Priestley rejected that conclusion; and died an impenitent infidel! Why, then, should not Cavendish also have rejected it, or, at least, long struggled against its adoption? It is in vain that Mr. Harcourt cites a statement of Priestley's, in 1786, that he had never found '*the full weight*' of the airs employed in the water produced;

and seems to regard this as a justification of his unbelief. If it was so, Cavendish also might have had that justification; for he never pretends to have found *the exact weight* of the airs in the water; nor, indeed, could the processes he employed admit of such a precise verification. For he never actually took the weight of the airs with which he experimented; but merely *estimated* it, from their volume, and his assumed knowledge of their specific gravity; and was of course exposed to the hazard of far greater uncertainties than any supposed to be admitted by Priestley. But the truth is, that this supposed apology of Priestley's for his unbelief, was no apology, or even palliation, at all; since, if the whole contents of the close vessels were of the same weight at the end of the experiment as at the beginning, (and *this* is truly the only weighing relied on by Cavendish,) and there was air missing and water produced, while the residuary air was of the same *quality* as at first—the experiment was as complete, and the conclusion, as to the composite nature of the water, as well supported, without any weighing of the water, or *calculation* of the weight of the missing air, as it could be after both these operations. The only essential thing, besides the successive weighings of the vessels (and these, after all, could only prove their tightness, and the imponderable nature of light and heat,) was the *unaltered condition of the residuary air*; or the non-formation of any new compound, from which the water, as an element, might have been *deposited*. But if *that* cause of error was once eliminated, we really see no value in that supposed quantitative equalisation of the air and water, to which Mr. Harcourt ascribes so much importance; nor any merit in that anxiety, on Cavendish's part, to establish it, which he so highly extols; and think the conclusion might have been quite as well made out, without any relative weighings at all. Suppose a quantity, even an unknown and unmeasured quantity, of well-prepared oxygen and hydrogen, to be fired in a close vessel, and a large portion of the airs to disappear, and a sensible quantity of water to be produced, we hold firmly that, if the uncondensed air was found to be either oxygen or hydrogen *of the same quality as at first*, there would need no farther weighing or calculation to complete the experiment, and warrant the conclusion. Since, without caring or taking account of *any specific quantity of any thing*, from first to last, these phenomena alone would be enough to show that the missing airs had combined into the extant water; and that the weight of the one *must* be equal to that of the other, if that of the containing vessel was unchanged. The exact *proportion* in which the airs should be united to form water could not, indeed, be determined without some mensuration. But the grand problem, that water was a

compound, and these two gases its constituents, would be perfectly solved without it.

But this is a digression; and may even pass for a heresy. We only meant by it to show that Priestley had no colour or apology for his unbelief, that might not have been pleaded for Cavendish. But there is no lack of other distinguished recusants, who might have graced his first rejection or scepticism as to conclusions which Mr. Harcourt thinks must have been from the first irresistible.

Will he be satisfied if we place *Watt himself* — for a brief probationary period — on that list of recusants? For we do think that there was an interval, though no doubt a very short one, during which, with all the phenomena more vividly before him than *ever* they were before Cavendish, he, too, yet resisted or shrank back from the conclusion! In that terse and pregnant letter which he addressed to Mr. Hamilton as early as 26th of *March*, 1783, he says: ‘Dr. Priestley puts dry dephlogisticated air and dry inflammable air into a close vessel, and kindles them by electricity. *No air remains, at least if the two were pure.* But he finds on the sides of the vessel *a quantity of water, equal in weight to the airs employed!* Yours affectionately, ‘James Watt.’ Now here, if any where, is a statement in which it might emphatically be said that the conclusion was plainly *involved* in the facts recorded. In point of precision, completeness, and apt juxtaposition of parts, there is nothing to be compared with it in all Mr. Harcourt’s rambling and incoherent lithographed records. Here we have all the essentials concentrated and brought to bear upon each other in one view, as if expressly to *demand*, at once, and *SUPPLY*, a solution. Yet that solution is not given! and we must, therefore, hold, had not yet been clearly perceived. It had presented itself, no doubt, and was already fermenting in the powerful and capacious mind which had so clearly conceived, and so lucidly defined, the problem. But the fermentation was not completed, nor the term of incubation expired. Even the penetrating and intrepid spirit of Watt was baffled and perplexed for a season; and required time for consideration and circumspection before coming to a decision. The decision, to be sure, did come, as we know, within three short weeks after this date, and perhaps a good deal sooner. But still it was decidedly a period, in which the ardent and adventurous mind of Watt remained in a condition which Mr. Harcourt thinks it impossible for any sane mind to have been in for a single instant — a condition, that is, of clear perception and full knowledge of the phenomena, and utter uncertainty as to their true interpretation. But the difficulties which

thus held back a Watt for three weeks, might well have kept the colder and more timid nature of a Cavendish in perplexity for ever. 'Doubting Castle' was a sort of home to the one, in which he could pass his days in good comfort: to the other it was a hateful prison, from which he was sure to make a speedy escape, by force or by management. But there were many others who doubted much longer than Watt, and were not convinced even by what we allow at last convinced Cavendish.

Among the most remarkable of these we are disposed to place Monge, a chemist of the very greatest skill, learning, and ingenuity, who, without ever having heard of them, performed all Cavendish's experiments, with incomparably greater caution, accuracy, and diligence; carefully weighing the airs submitted to the operation, making a correct allowance for all barometrical variations occurring in the course of it, and examining and testing, both the water and the residuary air, with the most scrupulous minuteness. In this way, too, and by a long series of patient experiments, he produced a far greater quantity of pure water than had been procured either by Cavendish or Lavoisier; and yet he hesitates as to the conclusion which should be drawn from them, even after being made aware of the experiments and conclusions of those distinguished fellow-labourers. Nothing can be more instructive than the account which he gives of his own absolute indecision and philosophic doubt, in the close of that beautiful memoir which he dedicated to these subjects, and printed in 1786, in the 'Transactions of the Academy of Sciences.' He begins by stating, as the grand result of all his observations, that 'when oxygen and hydrogen are exploded together in proper proportions, the only products are, *pure water, light, and heat,*' and then proceeds,

'It only remains, then, to consider whether we should conclude that these two gases consist of distinct substances, dissolved in the element of heat, which, upon being fired together, escape from that common solvent, and by their union with each other produce water; which, in that case, can no longer be considered as a simple elementary body. Or, whether these gases consist of elementary water, dissolved in two unknown elastic fluids, which upon their combustion merely deposit the water, and unite to form the substances of *heat and light*, which escape through the sides of the apparatus, and which in their turn would be thus proved to be of a composite nature. *Both suppositions appear to be equally extraordinary; and it seems impossible to decide for either, without many new experiments.*'

After this it can, surely, be no disparagement to any one, that, though aware of all Cavendish's results, he was not prepared to adopt Watt's explanation of them. But there are

many more, and more confident dissentients. Kirwan, for example, the intimate friend and admirer of Watt, can only bring himself to say, in the end of 1784, that he is at last '*nearly convinced*' that the water is really produced; and it is not till 1790, that Black, who had contented himself at first with saying that the results were 'very surprising,' gave in his tardy adhesion, acknowledging, in a letter of that date to Lavoisier, that he '*long experienced a great aversion to the new system, which treated as errors what he had regarded as sound doctrine; but that this aversion, caused only by the power of habit (what a testimony to that wicked power!) had gradually diminished and given way.*' In like manner, Berthollet thought it necessary, so late as 1789, to dedicate no less than fifty pages to the refutation of objections to this very theory, which were still insisted on by other chemists (besides Priestley) of very considerable name; and candidly admits that he had himself rejected it 'longer than probably became a philosophy, which should raise us above those little motives which keep us bound down to all our old opinions.' But neither Berthollet, nor any of the sturdier heretics we have mentioned, ever questioned the accuracy of Cavendish's, Lavoisier's, or Monge's experiments; or had any more doubt of *the facts* they established, than those by whom they were respectively performed. Yet they all questioned, or positively rejected, their conclusions.

But the most signal instance of this strange resistance to the solicitations of importunate truth, is to be found, we think, in the eloquent account which Dumas has given in his *Leçons sur la Philosophie Chimique* for 1836, of the long judicial blindness of Lavoisier himself, in the early part of his investigations of this very subject; with a brief extract from which we shall close this concluding branch of our discussion.

'The formation of water,' he says, 'is actually so common, and its decomposition so frequent in our experiments, *that it is difficult to understand* how Lavoisier could have been working at the development of his theory, for so many years, without discovering its true nature. At this critical period of his life it is, indeed, well worth while to follow the course of his labours; for at every instant we see formations and decompositions of water perplexing and obscuring the phenomena he is observing, without his reason being ever awakened to the cause. He goes on, however, explaining what he understands, and merely recording what escapes his penetration at the time—trusting for light to the future. He had, in fact, consumed so much gas, and produced so much water, that he cannot but be blamed for not sooner attending to it, and making use of the clue which was thus furnished for his guidance; at the same time, it is matter of admiration that these early experiments, which seemed at

the time so imperfect and inexact, all become precise by his subsequent discoveries ; while nothing requires to be changed in the general views they had suggested : ' and he afterwards notices that the experiments in which he, along with Meusnier, accomplished *the analysis* of water, were chiefly valuable as enabling him 'to dispel *the doubts which the process of its synthesis* had not been able to remove from some scrupulous understandings.'

The fact of this obstinate incredulity is also noticed in Lavoisier and Meusnier's own memoir, here referred to by Dumas ; where they complain that, after all the trouble they and Monge had taken to 'exclude all room for doubt,' some persons still insisted that the water 'produced by the *synthesis* might be held to have been merely *suspended* in the airs, and deprived 'of support at the moment of their combustion,' and therefore they now bring forward this corroborative proof, by *analysis*.

We see, then, that men quite as acute as Cavendish, and fully in possession of all his, and of still better experiments, yet demurred to the conclusion which Mr. Harcourt thinks followed *necessarily and immediately* from the knowledge of them ; and we may now, therefore, be allowed perhaps to say, that we see no such force in his favourite argument, as to the conclusion being *involved* in the experiments, as must compel us to shut our eyes on the proofs we have already produced, that Cavendish could, in fact, have drawn no such conclusion at the time, and most probably had formed no positive one till after he had heard of the clear and confident explanation of Watt. If there was grave doubt and confident incredulity in other quarters, after the far more accurate and multiplied experiments of Lavoisier and Monge, would there be any thing to wonder at in the perplexity and indecision of Cavendish, as to the meaning of his own comparatively imperfect trials ? He was by nature hard to satisfy, as to his grounds of decision ; and quick only in suggesting reasons for doubt ; and he could scarcely fail to be aware of some, at least, of the many imperfections which every one must now recognise in his processes. He evidently took no precautions, for example, to ensure *the dryness* of the gases he used, or the purification of his hydrogen from the many contaminations to which it was exposed in the course of preparation. They who wish to see how formidable these were, and by what contrivances alone they could be avoided, would do well to look into the beautiful experiments of M. Dumas, on the composition of water, published in his *Mémoires de Chimie*, in 1841, (p. 399, &c.) From his neglect of these precautions, it is also certain that the hydrogen employed by Cavendish was far indeed from being pure ; as he estimates its weight at least one-third higher than it ought to be ; and in

fact only deduces this, in his capital experiment, from certain references to the specific gravity of the atmospheric air from which it had been separated. In spite of all this, we do not mean to dispute that the results he obtained were sufficient to have warranted his conclusion; being, indeed, substantially all that Watt had to warrant his. But we do think that the consciousness of these imperfections was very likely to have caused the hesitating and over scrupulous mind of Cavendish to shrink from adopting it, till encouraged by the example of a more peremptory and bolder spirit.

This, then, is the sum and amount of our own convictions on the subject; and we should be sorry indeed to have it thought that we carry them any farther. We do not believe, and would not appear to insinuate, that the true interpretation of his experiments had never at all occurred to Cavendish till it was suggested to him by Watt, in spring 1783; or that, immediately upon that revelation, he unfairly resolved to claim it as his own, and incontinently despatched Blagden to Paris to promote that dishonest claim. Our own impression is, that it had previously presented itself to him, as a possible, perhaps probable, but by no means certain or satisfactory solution, of the startling phenomena he had observed. He might have been hesitating, like Monge, between the alternative conclusions of that ingenious inquirer; or be resting on the balance of *other* alternatives, of his own suggestion; he might have thought the synthetic proof insufficient till confirmed by the analysis; or he might even have been contented, with his unimpatient temper and habits of long pondering, to let the problem remain, as for the present, insoluble; and to wait, like Lavoisier, for light from the future. On such a frame or state of mind, it is difficult to say, with any assurance, what the effect might be, of the strong, lucid, and, above all, confident and unhesitating decision of Watt. Such an example presented suddenly to such a person, may sometimes operate like the spark which sets the collected combustibles in a blaze; or the little shake which will often effect the instant crystallisation of elements that floated quiescent before, in the yet untroubled fluid. Nor will it always be easy for the party himself to determine how much of what follows is owing to the external impulse, and how much to the natural development of his own pre-existing impressions; what virtue there was in the Angelic troubling of the waters, and what in their own healing properties. Nothing, we believe, is so common, as for men of full minds to confound, in their ultimate conclusions, much of what they have derived from others, with what they have fairly worked out for themselves; and to be really unable to discri-



minate between their unconscious borrowings, and the products of their own honest labour.

Some confusion of this kind must have occurred, we are persuaded, in the case of Cavendish; for there is no other supposition, which, in our view of them, can reconcile either one part of his conduct with another, or the whole of it with his character. He must have known, we think, that he was indebted to Watt for the first proper *extrication* of his theory, or for the firm and clear view he ultimately attained of it; but he was, probably, also aware, that he was *not* indebted to him for its first suggestion — and these conflicting impressions naturally brought him into some perplexity. Under the influence of the first, he wisely and properly abstained from asserting any such claim of priority over Watt, as he had resolutely maintained against Lavoisier; while the effect of the second was to prevent him from making any express acknowledgment at all, of an obligation which he felt it would be difficult to define, and yet impossible to admit without large qualifications. In this dilemma he took the course, which, if not quite unobjectionable, was the most natural, perhaps, for a man of his habits and temperament; to abstain, in short, from either giving or asking credit to any precise extent, and to say as little as possible on the probable state of the balance. By waiving all claim to priority over Watt, either as to announcement or actual discovery, he virtually admitted, we think, that Watt had been first with the disclosure, as all the extant writings imported, and, at least as early as himself with the real formation of the theory; which implies that his own views of it were not completed, at all events, at any earlier period; while, by withholding all direct acknowledgment of help or obligation, he left it open to himself and his friends to challenge as large a share of merit in the original conception, as the world could be persuaded to allow.

What that share really was, or for how much he was actually indebted to his illustrious contemporary, it is now, we fear, impossible to determine. He probably took it to be less than it really was; and Watt, perhaps, took it to be more. Their respective admirers, too, will continue, we suppose, to differ in their estimates; and to this we can have no objection — so long as facts are not distorted, nor inconsistencies overlooked. For our own parts, we have vindicated Watt's claim, we think, as an original and independent discoverer of the true composition of water, and as the very first who proclaimed that discovery to the world; and beyond this we have no serious anxiety. It would derogate nothing from his merit, if Cavendish also could be proved to have been such a discoverer — as we rather think Monge really was, though at a later period. But we must say

that we think it plain that, though Cavendish may have had floating visions of that discovery at an earlier period, he had no clear revelation of it till it was announced by Watt; and that, even if his *conception* of the theory could be traced to a prior date, it is evident that he never would have been *delivered of it*, had not Watt assisted at the birth.

Had these two eminent men but lived more together, we feel assured, from the perfect candour and modesty which belonged to both characters, that they must have come to a perfect understanding, upon this and all other things: And, but for the shy and unsocial habits of the one, and the distant residence of the other, we are persuaded that such a complete and cordial explanation must have taken place. For the bitter expressions of Watt, on De Luc's first mentioning to him the tenour of Cavendish's paper, were used long before he had made that important addition to it, in which the truth and originality of Watt's theory are implicitly admitted, without the least hint of its having been in any way anticipated by his own. With this, too, the calm and confident spirit of Watt appears to have been satisfied; for he afterwards became personally acquainted with Cavendish, and they continued, we are happy to learn, for the remainder of their joint lives, on a footing of mutual courtesy and regard. They knew each other, in short, as men of genius and honour; and as fellow-labourers 'in the great Task-master's eye;'—and this was enough, perhaps, for their satisfaction in their then condition of mortality.

They know each other, however, still better, by this time! And a very pretty '*Dialogue of the Dead*' might be composed, we think, by any one who could now contrive to overhear them discussing, with smiles of self-pity and mutual indulgence, their little earthly distrusts and perplexities—and triumphs and discoveries, in those mild Elysian shades where misunderstandings and jealousies can no longer intrude; and where we are assured that an honoured place is reserved for all who have benefited their kind by their genius, or exalted it by their example,

'Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes,  
Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.'

In the mean time, and waiting such a revelation, we have honestly done what in us lay to reconcile the claims of their admirers in this world; and endeavoured at least, to hold the balance between these distinguished rivals, with as careful and steady a hand as our own infirmities would allow. We cannot report that it hangs even. But we think we can with confidence attest that no false weights have been admitted into the preponderating scale.

ART. IV.—*Letter from Sir Robert Peel to the Electors for the Borough of Tamworth*, pp. 35. London: 1847.

AMONG the present phenomena of the political world there is none more important than the amount of ability which is applied to the conduct of the daily and weekly press. Of late years, a higher class of minds—men of cultivated understandings, well versed in history, literature, and the principles of political philosophy,—have become regular contributors to many of the most widely circulated newspapers. The result has been, that, in the midst of much that is worthless, and much that is mischievous, a large amount of useful political discussion has been laid before the public, in a state comparatively free from scurrility and senseless exaggeration; and that the capacity of the people for passing a sound judgment on public measures has been greatly increased by the force and clearness with which the arguments on both sides of every important question have been presented to their minds. However strong may be the current of prejudice or error, in any particular direction, it almost always happens that some journal has the courage and good sense to struggle against the stream, and to attempt to obtain a hearing for the unpopular, though correct, view of the question. If we compare the present state of the newspaper press with the period of the struggle between Charles I. and the Long Parliament, when the appeal to public opinion was made by long-winded state papers, written and circulated by the two contending parties; or even with the times of Queen Anne and George I., when politicians carried on their contests with pamphlets and periodical essays; or if we go still lower—to the time of the French Revolution, and refer to the extracts from the contemporary press given in the *Anti-jacobin*, we shall be able to estimate the important change in practical politics which has been caused by the greatly improved character of our newspaper press, and the extensive influence which it exercises upon the conduct of public affairs. Such, however, being the extent and nature of the political discussion carried on by that portion of the periodical press which is of daily and weekly appearance, there is little need, or indeed opportunity, for a *Quarterly Reviewer* to remark upon the politics of the day; and if we venture at certain intervals to submit to our readers ~~our~~ general opinions on the political state of the country, it is only because we think that our position enables us to take a more comprehensive and deliberate, and we trust a more dispass-

sionate view of passing events than can be taken by those who are compelled to form their opinion at the moment, and to write it down as soon as formed; being subjected to the same necessity of hasty judgment, as statesmen of hasty action.

It appears to us, that the present time demands from us such a retrospective and prospective view of the state of the country as we have just described. We have just entered on the first session of a new parliament, and the second session of a new ministry, which had previously not commanded a majority in either house of parliament. Besides, the commencement of a new era in our commercial legislation may be almost dated from the year 1846. Political parties, broken up, thrown into confusion, and almost pulverised by the events of that year, have not hardened again into a new and compact adhesion. The seeds of new combinations and new measures, perhaps even of new opinions, are floating about at random in the political chaos, and await the organising hand of the statesman, who is to separate the discordant elements, and shape them into a new and more regular form. At such a period as this, it may not be devoid of use, if we trace an outline of the principal events of our internal history during the last few years, for the purpose of ascertaining the existing position of parties and opinions, and the political state of the country, and of considering what is the policy which is best suited to our present social condition.

The fiscal propositions of Lord Melbourne's government in 1841 were made under unfavourable circumstances; but they were based upon sound economical principles, and it would have been well for the country if they had been adopted. Free trade opinions had not at that time obtained the currency and stability which subsequent events have given them; and the mercantile, as well as agricultural classes, were startled and alarmed by the proposed changes. There was no Irish famine to enforce the arguments in favour of cheapness and abundance, or against high prices and an artificially restricted supply. Throughout the country there was a prevailing, though groundless, dread of the relaxation of the protective system; and the Conservative party in parliament saw that the time was come when the finishing blow could be safely given to the already weakened Whig administration. In the debates which preceded the fall of this ministry, and during the general election which succeeded it, Sir Robert Peel, and his chief supporters in the House of Commons, did little to inflame the anti-free-trade feeling, and they carefully abstained from the use of expressions which committed them to the perpetual maintenance of protective duties on corn. Sir Robert Peel's oppo-

sition to the government proposal on this latter subject was mainly rested on the supposed superiority of a sliding scale to a fixed duty. But although he did little to increase the anti-free-trade cry, he did not repudiate it; by his silence at so critical a moment he permitted his followers to believe that he shared their opinions; he maintained the necessity of a protective duty on corn; and by heading the attack upon the government, and subsequently succeeding to the office of prime minister, he certainly took advantage of their strenuous and combined exertions in favour of the principle of protection.

However, soon after his accession to power, Sir R. Peel began to show that he was not prepared to purchase the support of the agricultural interest by any extraordinary concessions to their wishes. The revised corn law which he proposed at the commencement of the session of 1842, mitigated, in some degree, the previous protection, and lost him the adhesion of the Duke of Buckingham, who left the cabinet from dissatisfaction with the new measure. The alterations of the tariff proposed in the same year, and in 1844, (particularly the remission of the duties on foreign cattle and meat), and even the Canada corn law of 1843, were more decided movements in the direction of free trade, and created much alarm and discontent among the agricultural party. The measures of Sir R. Peel's administration respecting Ireland, especially the bill for the permanent endowment of Maynooth, were dictated by a liberal spirit towards the Roman Catholics; and no attempt was made to conciliate the high Church party by the appropriation of public money to ecclesiastical purposes, or by bigoted measures on the subject of national education. In the conduct of his ministry there were no signs of a reactionary tendency; though the ministers did not call themselves liberals, they administered the government upon liberal principles; and thus they had practically alienated a considerable section of the most backward of their own party, even in the summer of 1845.

Sir R. Peel's adoption of a more liberal policy than had been anticipated of him, appears to have arisen mainly from his consciousness, when in government, of the necessity of adapting his measures to public opinion, and of not falling short of a standard which had been practically established by his predecessors. Having assumed the leadership of the reformed parliament, and being placed in a position where he could closely watch the course of public events, and the effects of new legislation, he felt the convenience and also discovered the safety and practical good working of a liberal system of administration. Enlightened by experience, he discarded many traditional opin-

ions which he had hitherto retained from habit, and without sufficient examination.\*

In this state of mind he received, during the autumn of 1845, the first accounts of the failure of the potato crop, which began then to show itself to a considerable extent over the whole United Kingdom, but which was, for obvious reasons, most formidable in Ireland. Influenced by the example of Belgium and other foreign countries which had already opened their ports to foreign grain, he came without delay to the conclusion that the utmost facilities ought to be given for the importation of corn. Accordingly, on the first of November he proposed to the cabinet that 'the duties on the import of foreign grain should be suspended for a limited period, either by order in council or by legislative enactment; parliament, in either case, being summoned without delay.'† He considered this proposition as involving the necessity of a reconsideration of the laws imposing restrictions on the import of foreign grain, and thought that 'any new laws to be enacted should contain within themselves the principle of gradual reduction and final repeal.' To this proposition the cabinet did not accede; only three‡ of Sir R. Peel's colleagues supported him in this prompt and decisive though judicious policy. Nothing, therefore, was said or done publicly. Near the end of the month appeared Lord J. Russell's letter to the electors of London, in which he complained of the inaction of the government at so critical a moment§, expressed his opinion that the time for a compromise was past, and declared himself in favour of the total though not necessarily immediate abolition of the corn duties. 'The imposition (he said) of any duty at present, *without a provision for its extinction within a short period*, would but prolong a contest already sufficiently fruitful of animosity and discontent. The struggle to make bread scarce and dear, when it is clear that part, at

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\* In his speech on the 22d of January, 1846, Sir R. Peel says, in reference to his change of opinion on the Corn Laws: — 'Now, sir, let me again repeat, that I claim no credit whatever for having drawn my conclusions from abstract reasoning — my conviction has been brought about by observation and experience.' — 83 Hans. p. 77.

† Sir R. Peel's Letter to the Queen, of 8 Dec. 1845. 83 Hans. p. 1005. See also his statement, *ib.* p. 86.

‡ Two out of the three persons alluded to are understood to have been Sir James Graham and Lord Aberdeen.

§ Lord J. Russell afterwards stated his opinion in parliament, that ministers, by proroguing parliament at this crisis, 'were not doing their duty to their sovereign and the country.' — 22d Jan. 83 Hans. 97.

‘least, of the additional price goes to increase rent, is a struggle deeply injurious to an aristocracy which (this quarrel once removed) is strong in property, strong in the construction of our legislature, strong in opinion, strong in ancient associations and the memory of immortal services.’\*

The cabinet reassembled on the 26th of November, and agreed to the issue of an extraordinary commission for the relief of distress in Ireland. Shortly afterwards Sir R. Peel renewed his proposition to the cabinet, with the exception of the order in council. The events which had occurred since the beginning of the month had modified the views of the former majority, and on this occasion Lord Stanley stood alone in his opposition. Lord Stanley had been willing, from the first meeting of the cabinet, to consent to a temporary suspension of the corn duties, but he refused to consent to their prospective abolition. After taking a short time for consideration, he decided to tender his resignation; and in this step he was supported by one of his colleagues, whom he did not feel at liberty to name, but who subsequently joined Sir R. Peel.† Upon this Sir R. Peel’s government was broken up, and his resignation was accepted by the Queen on the 6th of December. As Lord Stanley was not prepared to undertake the formation of a government, the Queen, of her own choice, then sent for Lord John Russell.

Such is a brief though accurate narrative of the proceedings of Sir R. Peel in pursuance of a resolution, which has perhaps given rise to more discussion and more angry comment, both in and out of parliament, than any other act of a public man in this country, and which has been attended with consequences the importance of which has not yet been fully developed. We, of course, derive unmixed satisfaction from the conversion of Sir R. Peel on the subject of the Corn Law, and only regret that it did not take place at an earlier period. Against the body of his own party, however, he appears, by this change, to have committed an inexpiable sin; particularly by his *mode* of effecting the transition. We observe, from a late number of the *Quarterly Review*, that the quarrel between Sir R. Peel and his late followers, has now, to a great extent, become a question of *protédés*; he ought not, it is said, to have altered his course on so important a matter, without previously informing and

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\* This letter is reprinted in Hansard, *ib.* p. 110.

† See Lord Stanley’s speech, 25th May, 1846; 86 Hans. p. 1139; Lord Haddington’s speech, 26th May, *ib.* p. 1267; Sir R. Peel’s, 22d Jan. 1846; 83 Hans. p. 88. It is understood that the Duke of Buccleugh was the member of Sir R. Peel’s cabinet referred to by Lord Stanley.

consulting his party. This is too nice a question of party morality for us to attempt any solution of it; but we may be permitted to make a few remarks on the position in which he stood in the memorable month of November 1845.

It was almost universally admitted that it was incumbent on the government at that time to relax the restrictions on the importation of corn. Although it has been attempted of late to deny that there was any scarcity of food, or any ground for expecting it in the last months of 1845, nobody at the time had any doubt on the matter. Lord John Russell's letter, dated the 22d of November, is decisive evidence of the prevalent belief on this point, if any evidence is required.\* Lord Stanley was willing to consent to a temporary suspension of the duties, and a similar opinion was afterwards expressed in parliament by most of the protectionist party.†

The practical question at issue between Sir R. Peel and Lord Stanley, when the latter, at the end of November, stood alone in his opposition, and broke up the government, was whether the Corn Laws should be suspended temporarily, upon an understanding that the duties should revive after the suspension; or should be suspended temporarily, with a view to their ultimate though gradual repeal. The question is thus stated by Sir R. Peel, in his speech of May 15th.

'It was quite impossible for me, consistently with my own convictions, after a suspension of import duties, to propose the re-establishment of the existing law with any security for its continuance. Well, then, the question which naturally arose was this — shall we

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\* Compare also the following excellent remarks in Lord J. Russell's speech of 22d of January, 1846: — 'I see, with no inconsiderable surprise, that at meetings of the agricultural interest, it is alleged that the danger in which we are placed has been exaggerated; that scarcity does not exist; that the prospect of famine has been exaggerated; and therefore we ought to leave the protection-laws, as far as food is concerned, as they at present stand. But do these gentlemen never carry their thoughts forward? Do they never consider that if it has pleased Providence to visit us with a calamity lighter than was at one time dreaded, *there may come a time when scarcity may be undoubted — when it may come home to the eyes, and understandings, and feelings of all men — and when the prospect of famine may be too near and too real not to appal the stoutest hearts among us?* Do these gentlemen wish to wait for such a time as that? Do they wish to wait until no power of choice is left them — till they have no discretion — *and till nothing remains but a capitulation to the multitude*, who will imperiously demand the repeal of those laws which limit the supply of food?' — 83 Hans. p. 108.

† See Sir R. Peel's speech, 16th Feb. (83 Hans. p. 1015.); May 15th. (86 Hans. p. 690.); Sir J. Graham, 10th Feb. (83 Hans. p. 717.)



propose some diminished protection to agriculture; or, in the state of public feeling which will exist after the suspension of restriction, shall we propose a permanent and ultimate settlement of the question?’

Afterwards he adds:

‘I think you could have continued this law, notwithstanding these increased difficulties, for a short time longer; but I believe that the interval of its maintenance would have been but short, and that there would have been, during the period of its continuance, a desperate conflict between different classes of society; that your arguments in favour of it would have been weak; that you might have had no alternative at an early period, had the cycle of unfavourable harvests returned—and who can give an assurance that they would not?—that you might at an early period have had no alternative but to concede an alteration of this law under circumstances infinitely less favourable than the present to a final settlement of the question. . . . It was the foresight of these consequences—it was the belief that you were about to enter into a bitter and, ultimately, an unsuccessful struggle, that has induced me to think that for the benefit of all classes—for the benefit of the agricultural class itself—it was desirable to come to a permanent and equitable settlement of this question.’\*

The same line of argument had been pursued by Sir R. Peel in his speech of the 16th February.

‘After the suspension of the existing law, and the admission of foreign importation for a period of several months, how do you propose to deal with the existing Corn Laws? That is the question which a minister was bound to consider who advised the suspension of the Corn Laws. Now, my conviction is so strong, that it would be utterly impossible, after establishing perfect freedom of trade in corn for a period of seven or eight months, to give a guarantee that the existing Corn Law should come into operation at the end of that period, that I could not encourage the delusive hope of such a result. I know it may be said, that after a temporary suspension of the law, the law itself would revive by its own operation—that there would be no necessity for any special enactment to restore its vigour. But I think it is an utter misapprehension of the state of public opinion to suppose it possible, that after this country, for eight months, should have tasted of freedom in the trade of corn, you could revive, either by the tacit operation of the law itself, or by new and special enactment, the existing Corn Law. Surely the fact of suspension would be a condemnation of the law. It would demonstrate that the law, which professed, by the total reduction of duty on corn when it reached a certain price to provide security against scarcity, had failed in one of its essential parts.’†

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\* 86 Hans. p. 691—4.

† 83 Hans. p. 1018. See Sir R. Peel's re-statement of the same argument, *Address*, p. 26.

Sir James Graham likewise laid his objection to a mere suspension on similar grounds :

‘ I have told you that I think the present an unsatisfactory law ; and according to my present experience, I could not, after its suspension, have supported its reimposition. I have always stated that my objection to a fixed duty as a permanent fiscal measure is insuperable ; because I think that if the duty should be high, it would be impossible, when prices rose, to exact it ; and whenever prices fell, if the duty should be low, it would fail for the purposes of protection, and the agricultural interest would then incur all the obloquy of maintaining protection without deriving any advantages from it. We might have proposed some small remnant of the sliding-scale, with a reduction of protection, which it would have been unworthy of the agricultural interest to accept, and still more unworthy of the government to offer. Under these circumstances, the early abolition of the Corn Law, as it appeared to me, would be inevitable on its suspension.’ \*

According to the view taken by Sir R. Peel, the necessity for a suspension of the Corn Law was created by the emergency ; but out of this suspension, in the actual circumstances of the country, there arose a subsequent necessity for its prospective abolition. Against the solid arguments derived from public policy thus stated in the House of Commons, Lord Stanley has no stronger justification for his own course than the following appeal to feeling. After stating his doubts whether the relaxation of the corn duties would relieve the scarcity in Ireland, he proceeds thus :

‘ At the same time, so strongly and forcibly did I feel the importance of unanimity in the cabinet — so strongly was I convinced of the injury done by the breaking up of any government, that although entertaining serious doubts whether a suspension of the Corn Laws and the opening of the ports would be of avail, or might even be injurious, *I intimated my entire readiness to yield my own opinion, and consent to a suspension of the Corn Law*, provided a suspension was proposed. But when I was told . . . that that temporary exigency, that passing emergency of apprehended scarcity in Ireland, was not to lead to a remedy commensurate in duration with the expected evil ; but to be made the groundwork of suspending, for the purpose of not re-enacting, the Corn Law, *I felt that I could not take that course consistently with my own feeling as an honourable man ;* and that, with such ulterior views, to propose to parliament to sanction the opening of the ports would be to lead those who were disposed to support us into a snare and a delusion.’ †

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\* Speech, 10th Feb. 83 Hans. p. 718.

† Speech, May 25th. 86 Hans. p. 1138.

Let us now consider, setting aside all appeals to consistency and party ties, what were then the main practical difficulties in the way of a mere suspension of the corn duties, to be followed by their revival in a substantive form; and what would have been the probable result of this policy.

In the first place, it is to be borne in mind (as Sir R. Peel states in his Address to his Constituents, p. 26.), that 'no prudent minister deciding on that course at that time, could safely exclude from his consideration the probability that the same disorder which had affected the potato-crop of 1845, might affect that of 1846.' A disease, identical with that in Europe, had attacked the potatoes in North America in three successive years, beginning with 1843; and this fact could not fail to make an impression on the government. Again, the temporary suspension of a *sliding-scale* was tantamount to an admission of its practical failure. The argument against a *fixed duty* mainly relied upon, was the impossibility of collecting it during a period of high prices; whereas, a sliding-scale, it was said, adapted itself to all circumstances. Besides, what could be the use of relying on temporary suspensions of the duty at seasons of scarcity, when the suddenness of the change did not allow foreign nations to be prepared for our demand? The application of the principles of free trade to nearly all other articles of import, and particularly to cattle and meat, had likewise left the corn protection almost isolated, and from its isolation, weak, exposed to attack, and hard to defend. In addition to all this, there was the untiring, intelligent, and well-supported opposition of the Anti-corn-law League; there was Lord John Russell's recent declaration, that the time for a compromise on the Corn-law question was gone by; there was the prospect of a violent popular excitement in the large towns, as soon as it was known that the suspension would lead to no permanent change, and redoubled appeals to the people against selfish landlords who wished to make bread dear, in order to increase their rents. If Sir R. Peel had, in the winter of 1845-6, proposed a mere temporary suspension of the Corn Laws, refusing to hold out any prospect of a final settlement, he would have had to open a most odious and unpromising campaign for the agricultural interest, with the certainty of ultimate defeat, preceded by violent popular contests, and bitter exasperation of parties and classes. Even with unshaken convictions in the advantage and justice of the Corn Law, this would have been no easy or pleasing task; as Lord Stanley doubtless thought, when he refused to undertake the formation of a Protectionist Cabinet at this crisis. How impossible then was it to begin

this struggle, with convictions altogether undermined by fresh and decisive experience, as Sir R. Peel states his own to have been. The facts and considerations which produced this impression on his mind, are thus referred to by Sir R. Peel in his speech of the 22d of January, 1846.

‘My opinions have been modified by the experience of the last three years. I have had the means and opportunity of comparing the results of periods of abundance and low prices with periods of scarcity and high prices. I have carefully watched the effects of the one system and of the other; first, of the policy we have been steadily pursuing for some years, viz. the removal of protection from domestic industry; and next, of the policy which the friends of protection recommend. I have also had an opportunity of marking from day to day the effect upon great social interests of freedom of trade and comparative abundance. I have not failed to note the results of preceding years, and to contrast them with the results of the last three years; and I am led to the conclusion that the main grounds of public policy on which protection has been defended are not tenable; at least I cannot maintain them.’\*

These reasons are more completely stated in Sir R. Peel’s recent Address to his Constituents.

‘It was from the combined influence of these various considerations — from diminished confidence in the necessity or advantage of protection — from the increasing difficulty of resisting the application to articles of food of those principles which had been gradually applied to so many other articles — from the result of the experiment made with regard to cattle and meat in 1842 — from the evidences of rapidly increasing consumption — from the aggravation of every other difficulty in the maintenance of the Corn Laws, by the fact of their suspension on the first real pressure — it was from the combined influence of such considerations, that I came to the conclusion that the attempt to maintain these laws inviolate after their suspension would be impolitic, that the struggle for their maintenance would assume a new character, and that no advantage to be gained by success could counterbalance the consequences of failure, or even the evils attending protracted conflict. . . . Between the maintenance of the Corn Laws inviolate, and a measure involving their ultimate repeal, I saw no middle course satisfactory or advantageous to any interest; I saw still less of satisfaction or advantage in indecision and irrational delay; I could not admit the incompetency of the present parliament to deal with this as with every other question of public concern. There appeared to me, upon the whole, much less of public evil in the resolution finally to adjust the question of the Corn Laws than in any other that could be then adopted; and that being my deliberate conviction, I felt it to be my duty to make the painful

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\* 83 Hans. p. 71.

sacrifices which the acting upon that conviction must inevitably entail' (P. 31, 32.)

On reviewing, with the assistance of subsequent events, the proceedings of Sir R. Peel at this crisis, we are satisfied that his policy was wisely chosen, and that no other course was open to him, consistently with the public interests, except indeed a resignation immediately after the rejection of his first proposition to the cabinet. His view of the impracticability of a temporary suspension, accompanied with an intention to restore the protective duties on corn, has been completely confirmed by experience. We now know that if the corn duties had been suspended in November 1845, until September 1846, the suspension must have been renewed until September 1847, and that the suspension until September 1847, must have been again renewed until March 1848. If the temporary scale commencing at 10s. was abandoned almost as soon as it saw the light, even by the protectionists themselves, what would have been the fate of the more effectual barrier to importation created by the previous sliding-scale? With a suspension thus renewed, and with the opportunities thus given for the working of an effective agitation—the arguments of the free-traders being enforced by the constant presence of Irish famine and by prices of wheat above 80s.—the defeat of protection and the triumph of free trade were absolutely certain, whatever might have been the moves of the ministerial game. The anti-corn law leaguers must indeed have been sorry engineers, if, with this solid fulcrum for their lever, they could not give the finishing shake to the undermined and tottering edifice of protection. And if, with such an event in view, Sir R. Peel had pledged himself to restore the Corn Laws after a temporary suspension, and had found himself utterly incapable of redeeming his pledge, but had convulsed the country by the fruitless attempt to maintain an odious and unjust privilege, he would, indeed, have been obnoxious to the charge of leading his supporters into 'a snare and a delusion.'

When Lord J. Russell was suddenly called on to form a cabinet in December, 1845, he received a distinct assurance of Sir R. Peel's intention to support him in carrying through parliament the repeal of the Corn Law. Nor can there be any

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\* Lord J. Russell closes his letter to the Queen, of the 20th of December, 1845, with the following passage:—'The country requires, above all things, an *early and peaceable* settlement of a question which, if not so settled, may, in an adverse state of affairs, cause a fearful convulsion.'

doubt that Sir R. Peel wished that the Corn-law question should be settled by those who, for some years past, had been the declared opponents of the existing system. Nevertheless, the circumstances under which Lord John Russell was called on to undertake this settlement were not very encouraging. In the first place, he had not a majority in either house of parliament; and it was doubtful how many of Sir R. Peel's supporters would follow him, as a member of opposition, in voting for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Lord J. Russell's friends were, moreover, summoned unexpectedly to London from different parts of the country; there was little time for consultation and the removal of difficulties, nor were there the eagerness and warmth inseparable from the party struggle which usually precedes a change of government. The result was, that, owing to some personal objections wholly unconnected with the Corn-law question, Lord J. Russell failed in forming a government, and that Sir R. Peel and his colleagues, except Lord Stanley, resumed their former places. Whatever charge may be made against the leaders of the Whig party for their conduct at this crisis, it is certain that they cannot be accused of any rapacious desire of office. It is, in our opinion, to be regretted that Lord J. Russell did not accomplish the work which he had undertaken. He would have 'formed his ministry on the basis of a complete free trade in corn, to be established at once, without gradation or delay.'\* However, the settlement by Lord J. Russell, though equally certain with that accomplished by Sir R. Peel, would probably have been less pacific, and perhaps might have required a dissolution of parliament and the second year of scarcity to bring it to pass.

As far as the influence on public opinion is concerned, the chief merit of the victory over the Corn Law is due to the Anti-corn-law League. The leaders of this body carried the question in the country. But its repeal was carried through parliament by Sir R. Peel. If this had been done by Lord J. Russell, undoubtedly he would have possessed a stronger title to popular gratitude than at present; and he would have added another wreath to the laurels which he had previously gained by the achievement of great popular triumphs. On the other hand, the Liberal party (as we shall proceed to show) has, through the events of 1845-6, gained an advantage, which, if properly improved, must, for some time to come, ensure its preponderance in the state.

As the more unreasoning and selfish portion of the Conservative party — those who really believed that their rents

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\* Letter to the Queen, 83 Hans. p. 107.

depended on the sliding-scale, and who voted in order to keep up their rents—not only separated themselves from Sir R. Peel, but heaped every species of rancorous vituperation upon his head; it was impossible for a man of honourable feelings to remain minister under such circumstances, even if by some concession he could have purchased their future allegiance. It was, therefore, evident that Sir R. Peel's restored ministry would not long survive the repeal of the Corn Law. The Irish Disturbances Act was the occasion, rather than the cause, of his resignation. That obstacle might, indeed, if he had wished it, have been easily removed. No necessity existed for pressing forward the bill. But we feel satisfied that under no circumstances would the ministry of Sir R. Peel have survived more than a very short time the passing of the Corn-law repeal, which he had undertaken, though without a majority, to carry. The breach between him and the main section of his followers was complete. They would not be led by him; he did not wish to lead them. Neither of the two parties to the quarrel was willing to be reconciled. He could not apologise for a deliberate act; and they were too angry to accept any apology, or even to wish for one.

The result has been the lasting separation of all the leading and more intelligent portion of the Conservative party from the majority. The seceders hold an intermediate station, but visibly inclining towards Liberal opinions. They are unpledged, and free to act according to their individual views on all political questions: but recent events have clearly shown that they have a much stronger affinity with the Liberal than with the Protectionist party. Many occurrences, both during the last session and the late elections, have proved that the repulsion between Protectionists and free trade Conservatives is sufficiently strong to drive the latter towards the opposite scale of the balance.

The members of the Anti-corn-law League probably little thought what important political consequences would flow from their victory. They not only contributed greatly to the repeal of the Corn Law, but they have produced a permanent schism in the Conservative party, which has paralysed it for all active purposes.

*Plus illâ vobis acie, quam creditis, actum est  
Arsacidæ: bellum victis civile dedistis.*

Whatever may be the evils of an organised system of popular agitation, like that of the Anti-corn-law League, such a body is naturally called into existence by the obstinate adherence of politicians to unjust and impolitic laws; and its effects are less detrimental than the abuse which is attacked. The worst

consequence of such a body is, that it may create a vested interest in agitation, and prolong the existence of the combination beyond the occasion which gave it birth. Lord Stanley, even so late as the 25th of May, 1846, predicted, in the House of Lords, that this confederacy would not dissolve itself, although the Corn Law was repealed. 'When, my lords, (he said) was an organised agitation put down by concessions extorted from its opponents? Depend upon it, that when this body shall have once tasted the cup of political power, the draught will be too sweet to induce them to relinquish it. I agree with my noble friend that this is only one of the measures which, one after another, will be the object of the Anti-corn-law League.' Notwithstanding this confident prediction, we know that the Anti-corn-law League has been dissolved, both nominally and really, since the settlement of the Corn-law question; and that the leaders of that powerful body had, like Washington, the virtue, as well as good sense, to abdicate at the moment of their greatest power. In this respect they have exhibited a striking contrast with the Catholic association of Ireland, which, having, under the leadership of Mr. O'Connell, done much to procure the repeal of the Catholic disabilities, did not, when this legitimate object had been attained, surrender its power, but was revived, under the same leader, for the mischievous and impracticable purpose of detaching Ireland from England, and destroying the integrity of the empire.

The schismatic portion of the Conservative party — those who have deflected from the orthodox Tory faith, and incline to the Liberal heresy — must, by degrees, be incorporated into the Liberal party. The remaining section of the Conservatives, led, indeed, but scarcely recognising its leaders; held together by a mere antipathy; having no common principle of action; Protectionists in name, but repudiating protection as a practical object — must gradually become a mere element of resistance, a mere drag or impediment to useful measures, without any of the animating genius or practical sagacity which inspires a political party, and guides it to victory. All experience shows that in politics, as in war, numbers alone, without able leaders, avail but little. A few men, wise in counsel, may influence a whole people: but *Vix consili expers mole ruit sua*.

The parliament which was dissolved in July last, had reached a mature age, and the Queen's proclamation did not long anticipate its natural termination. Its dissolution was not the result of any political exigency, and the elections took place under



circumstances favourable to a deliberate expression of public opinion. The members elected to serve in the Commons house of parliament may be taken as fair exponents of the ordinary state of political opinion and party now existing throughout the country.

Reckoning the avowed supporters of the present government, together with the miscellaneous body professing liberal opinions, and adding to these the Peelite secession, there is a decided majority favourable to a liberal system of government in the new House of Commons.

When we speak of a *liberal system of government* — a phrase, we confess, which is not very precise — we mean such a system of government as is indicated by the opinions of the old Whig party of England, improved and enlarged by modern speculation, particularly in questions of public economy and jurisprudence. The old Tory party had certain landmarks too sacred to be disturbed — certain questions which it was not permitted to reason about. If any new measure was proposed, which threatened to infringe this holy precinct, all discussion was stopped *in limine* by an appeal to some ancient maxim or authoritative dictum, which it was an act of political impiety to dispute. At present if any established institution or law is impugned, if any change is proposed, the proposition may be expected to receive a fair consideration from a liberal government; and although the members of a liberal party may differ on its merits, or condemn it altogether, yet they will not shut the door against discussion. Such was Kant's notion of an *enlightened* state of society; he held enlightenment not to consist necessarily in correct knowledge or sound belief, but to be characterised by a readiness to submit all opinions to the test of reason. Nobody but a zealot supposes that a liberal party will always be in the right. Its characteristic is, not to be infallible in its opinions, but to admit a rational standard of judgment in questions of practical government and legislation. There is, unfortunately, no infallible standard of rectitude in political, more than in theological, matters. Neither the wisest statesmen, nor the most carefully selected popular bodies, are exempt from liability to error. But all progressive amelioration is impossible, if existing institutions are to be considered as possessing some attribute of mysterious sanctity, which is to protect them from profane criticism; or if they are to be defended on any other grounds than their tendency to promote the general welfare.

The new parliament, as we have already remarked, has been elected during a political calm, and therefore, under circumstances favourable to dispassionate deliberation upon the great

and complicated interests of the country. It is not likely that its early discussions will assume the character of a struggle between adverse parties, contending for power. The old Tory party — the party of resistance — the party who considered the law as the perfection of human reason, who thought that every opinion of Sir W. Blackstone was almost equal in authority to Holy Writ, who were satisfied with no wisdom but that of their ancestors, and no times but the good old times — this party is now reduced to a state of comparative impotence for purposes of action and government. The attempts to breathe a soul into this once-formidable Colossus — to dress up its political system with a little spurious philosophy, erroneous statistics, and perverted history, however ingenious and persevering, can, in these days of comparative intelligence, obtain but partial and limited success. On the other hand, the Liberal party in parliament, though composed of varied and, to a certain extent, discordant elements, agrees in this, that its views are generally moderate and practical, and that it aims at no objects which, by any license of language, can be called revolutionary: it neither meditates any attacks on the vested rights of property, nor does it seek after extensive organic changes of the constitution. Even the Irish repealers, who profess a wish to make Ireland a substantially independent state, seem scarcely prepared to press the question of repeal, or even to combine for the serious pursuit of this end. Already the repeal forces are divided into two sections, having rival leaders, and separate places of meeting; and it can hardly be expected that the parliamentary representatives of this interest will be very cordially united.

Considered as a mere party combination, as resting merely on the ancient Whig connexion and the support of a few prominent and historical families, the present government stands on too narrow a basis to be able to survive the first parliamentary storm. But if we consider its position in the country, and the principles which it represents, and if we estimate the comparative value of the forces now opposed to it, the elements of its strength will be seen to be numerous and important. The government of this country — never an easy task — has of late years become a work of immeasurable difficulty; but if this arduous problem should be happily solved by Lord J. Russell, he has it in his power to lay the foundation of a firm and durable administration.

Notwithstanding all that has been said by theoretical writers and believed by authors of written constitutions, on the separation of the legislative and executive departments in a free state, the executive government is, in this country, the main organ of

legislative proposals in parliament, and has acquired this character, to an increasing degree, of late years. We think this tendency is, on the whole, beneficial. In the present multitude of legislative measures, it would be desirable that bills should, as far as possible, be in the hands of a responsible department of the government, and not carried through by private members, even if private members were, in the press of business, always able to succeed in the attempt. Practically, it is not possible to separate the functions of legislation and administration; and those who have the supreme control of the daily administration, and are thereby best informed of the actual state of the country and the working of its laws, are the fittest persons for arranging and proposing new legislative measures. The vast amount of current business which falls upon the members of the executive government, and their necessary absorption in the numerous details of patronage and official correspondence, have however suggested to the *Economist* (a journal which has acquired a deserved authority on subjects of political economy) to propose a plan for transferring the preparation of laws to a legislative commission, leaving the Queen's ministers solely occupied with the work of administration. We consider this plan, in itself, inadmissible, for reasons which, if it were necessary, we could state in a short compass; but we fully agree in the importance of arming the executive government with ample means for the careful preparation and mature consideration of legislative measures, before their introduction into parliament. This is a subject which deserves more than a mere cursory allusion, and we will therefore now only remark that the practical skill for which this country is renowned has not hitherto shown itself in the form or order of its legislation, the state of which has now become not only a great difficulty in the ordinary administration of the law, but a serious impediment to its amendment and reform. An improved organisation for preparing bills for parliament, and for regulating the introduction of alterations during their progress through both houses, is however quite compatible with the supremacy of the queen's ministers over all the legislative propositions of the government, as well as with the entire freedom of parliamentary discussion.

Being thus practically possessed of the initiative in matters of legislation, the executive government ought to adopt a steady independent course, and guide the judgment of parliament and the country in the difficult career of legislative progress. It ought not to wait on opinion, to take up suggestions casually thrown out, or to look into the confused mass of daily discussion for instruction as to its measures. The steersman of the state

vessel ought to be well furnished with maps and charts, and to watch the compass, the winds and the tides, with vigilant care; but in guiding the helm of the state he should rely mainly on the resources of his own judgment.

Popular opinion may be taken as a tolerably certain, if not unerring, index of the existence of evils in the body politic. If prices are excessive; if food is scarce; if taxes are too high or unfairly imposed; if justice is sold or denied; if life or property is unprotected, the suffering people are sure to cry out. But popular opinion is not to be trusted for the remedy. Most of the political nostrums for existing evils which at any time pass current, have little to recommend them beyond the confidence with which they are proclaimed by their authors. In this respect the people are like an individual patient, whose sensations inform him with sufficient clearness that his bodily functions are deranged, but who is unable to prescribe for his own malady. All history teems with examples of this distinction. In every country the people has made just complaints of its laws, and the measures of its government: in every country the people has been eager to obtain legislative remedies which were either inapplicable to the social disease, or tended to aggravate its virulence. If we are not mistaken, the recent history of Ireland will alone supply to the mind of most readers a sufficient stock of illustrations of our meaning. The wise statesman will therefore carefully note the manifestations of public opinion with respect to all actual evils. In the social economy, that is an evil which is felt as such. The measure of popular endurance varies with time and opinion. What at one time is thought an inevitable evil, a part of the ills which flesh is heir to, becomes at another a grievance removable by the government. To all expressions of popular discontent the chiefs of the state ought to lend an attentive ear. But with respect to the remedies for the evils complained of, they must rely on their own judgment for selecting, out of the numerous plans proposed for their consideration, that which is most suitable to the circumstances of the case. A statesman who borrows his measures and policy from casual advisers, will, after a time, find himself in pretty much the same position as a physician who should advise with his patients as to the mode of their treatment. Moreover, the people are far more willing to be led with respect to the choice of remedies, than with respect to the fact of a remedy being needed. Provided that their grievance is admitted to be well founded, they are generally willing to afford a considerable latitude to practical statesmen in the choice of the measure by which it is to be redressed.

From the foregoing considerations we draw the conclusion that, in the existing state of our parliamentary constitution, it is incumbent on every government to take a decided lead with respect to their policy, to adhere to an avowed and intelligible set of principles, and not to shape their course according to the shifting current of popular opinion, which can never guide them safely. To attempt to form a manual of ministerial politics by taking a leaf out of every man's book, must end not only in producing a heterogeneous aggregate of principles of action which would successively disappoint and alienate every party in the state, but also in creating a just impression of weakness and instability.

Such being the position of the present government with respect to the country, and such the expectations reasonably entertained of its future conduct in the new parliament, it may be convenient for the reader to be reminded of the questions which may be presumed to await its labours, and we will therefore pass briefly in review the principal subjects to which the attention of the legislature is likely to be directed during the remaining and more important part of the session.

We may remark, in the first place, that the desire for *organic changes in the constitution* is not strong or general. No jealousy exists of the limited and regulated influence of the crown, exercised as it is by a deservedly popular sovereign, well understanding the spirit of constitutional royalty. The foundations of our parliamentary constitution are deeply cast in the confidence and affections of the people. The Reform Act has, for the present at least, been a *final* measure. It has satisfied the large towns, and has produced a House of Commons which moves in accordance with public opinion, and reflects its varying hues with sufficient fidelity. For the repeal of the rate-paying clauses of the Reform Act, there is a desire among certain classes of the population. Of household suffrage and annual or triennial parliaments much has not been heard of late. Short periods of parliament would tend to produce a more frequent change of members, which would lower the standard of efficiency and diminish the value of the services obtained. In the county constituencies, the working of the Chandos clause creates a constant friction between landlord and tenant, and in cases where coercion is practised, creates a desire for the protection of the ballot.

With respect to our *foreign relations*, we may begin by advertg to the generally pacific tendency which is now observable in the relations of civilised states. This tendency, which has been visibly on the increase since the peace of 1815, is owing to the concurrence of several causes, among which the

facilities afforded for intercourse by steam navigation and railways, and the improvement of roads, hold a prominent place. The removal of restrictions from commerce, so far as it has proceeded, contributes likewise to the same end. The increased activity and power of the newspaper press has also, by creating a sort of European opinion, brought nations and governments into closer contact with one another. Governments too are grown more formidable, and understand better how to wield the national strength at their disposal. No nation now will lightly provoke a general war, or can venture to reckon on coming out of the contest without some serious wound. The wars of the French Revolution and Empire have at least taught nations how hard blows are to be struck. War is no longer a question of the loss or gain of a border fortress: national honour, and even national existence, are at stake. Besides, the calamitous conflicts which ended in 1815 have certainly diffused throughout Europe (notwithstanding the large standing armies of the Continent) a strong conviction of the folly and hazard of wars between civilised nations: of the certain loss and the very doubtful gain. The chronic warfare which is waged with barbarous nations, as our own in India and at the Cape, that of the French in Algeria, and that of the Russians in the Caucasus, constitutes a sort of by-play in the great drama of the world, and does not interrupt the general tranquillity. As to the United States, their situation and political constitution alike unfit them for engaging in an European war, and a sufficient field is open to their energies in the absorption of the feeble Spanish provinces to the south.

A temporary, though we trust only a temporary, interruption of the peace of Europe has been created by the civil war which has recently broken out in Switzerland. The internal dissensions of this country (a lucid and impartial narrative of which we owe to the historical pen of Mr. Grote), originating ultimately in a narrow spirit of Catholic bigotry, and in the machinations of the Jesuits, have terminated in civil war, owing to the defective constitution of the Swiss Federation. We sincerely trust that the mediation of the great powers, which has been offered to the contending parties, will lead to an amendment of the Federal Pact on equitable terms. Against the deplorable confusion of Spain, produced by the short-sighted and unscrupulous selfishness of Louis Philippe, we may set off the dawn of brighter prospects in Italy, the probability of a more cordial union of its different states, of a more confiding spirit in the governments towards the people, and of a more sober and moderate spirit in the people towards the governments. There

are the seeds of great things in Italy, which, though long stified and inert, still retain their vitality.

Our extensive *colonial empire*, consisting of numerous communities, distant from each other, and dissimilar in laws, manners, climate, population, and language,—is necessarily exposed to many casualties. At present, however, it is in a state of quietude, and requires only the ordinary attention of the mother country. The colonial administration of Lord Grey has given satisfaction, so far as its results have been hitherto developed, and we have seen with much joy his departure from the practice of appointing military officers to conduct the civil government of colonies. India, likewise, after having lately caused so much anxiety, and so many conflicts, is now pacified; and we trust that the able governor-general—not selected on any narrow party ground—who has recently gone out, will be able to cultivate with success those arts of peace, which are so much needed in the vast territories under his control. The cost of the civil government of the dependencies of the English crown is principally defrayed from the local revenues; their chief expense to the mother country consists in their naval and military defence. We perceive that the attention of the government has been directed to the diminution of the latter head of expense, by affording means in some colonies for the organisation of a native armed force. The total expense of our large colonial possessions to the imperial treasury is, however, considerably less than the small and comparatively worthless settlement of Algeria causes to France.

The important subject of *Ireland* is treated in another article, where we have given a full account of the measures recently adopted for the relief of the distress caused by the failure of the potato in 1846 and 1847.

Owing to the mode in which Ireland has been settled\*, to the repeated confiscations, and the grants of large tracts of country to Englishmen, many of the landlords are absentees, managing their estates by agents, as if they were colonial plantations,

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\* The chancellor Clarendon thus sums up his account of the scramble for land which took place in Ireland in the reign of Charles II:—‘In a word, all men found that any settlement would be better than none; and that more profit would arise from a smaller proportion of land quietly possessed and husbanded accordingly, than from a much greater proportion under a doubtful title, and an uncertainty, which must dishearten any industry and improvement.’ *Life*, p. 133. We rejoice to think what new honours the name of Clarendon is now acquiring in a far more arduous re-settlement of Ireland than was ever attempted before.

advancing no capital for their improvement, and merely drawing their rent like a half-yearly tribute remitted to a distant sovereign, or a land-tax paid to an oriental government. Most resident landlords have initiated this system, and the established rule of managing landed property in Ireland is, that permanent improvements are not made by the landlord. This short-sighted system has continued unaltered for a long time, but its evils have at length become almost intolerable: and the recent extension of the Poor Law appears likely to bring matters to a crisis. The remedy for this disastrous state of things is not to be found in the general introduction over Ireland of the tenant right of Ulster, under the compulsion of the legal sanction. If this plan means any thing, it means that the rights of the landlord in the soil, and his interest in it, are to be still further reduced, and that the tenant, provided he fulfils certain easy conditions, is to hold in perpetuity. It appears to us that this plan proceeds in the wrong direction; it complicates still further a system of tenure already in a state of serious complication, and it substitutes for one set of needy landlords another set still more needy. Besides, as Cæsar said, if we are to commit a crime, let it be for supreme power; if the government is to interfere with rights of property, let the interference be at least beneficial and effective. We think that the true course of policy is indicated by the Encumbrances Bill of last session.

It is to measures of this kind, calculated to act, indeed, slowly, but to touch the causes of Irish misery and disorder, that we are to look for a diminution of murders and outrages in Ireland, by extinguishing the motives out of which these crimes spring. Nevertheless, until this slow process can be effected, it is the duty of the government to use all available means for protecting life and property in Ireland; especially at a time when the potato-famine and the system of public grants, combined with the agitation for tenant-right, have disorganised society, and aggravated all the incentives to crime.

The question of the Irish Church cannot be omitted in the consideration of any set of measures which profess to aim at the settlement of Ireland. It is puerile to expect that the Roman Catholic body of Ireland will ever permanently acquiesce in seeing the entire ecclesiastical endowment appropriated exclusively to a small minority of the population, while the church of the large majority is wholly unendowed. It is our firm conviction, that unless some legal provision is in some way made for the Irish Catholic Church, the Irish Established Church will, before many years are over, be deprived of its



endowments. We know how unfavourable a moment this is for attempting to approach this question, and we readily admit, after the late decisive exhibition of feeling in this country, that Mr. Pitt's plan, of endowing the Irish Catholic clergy from the national exchequer, cannot be carried into effect. We think, however, that some provision from the local taxation of Ireland is, on grounds both of justice and policy, due to the Catholic church of that country; and we may take this opportunity of stating, that however little we concur in Lord G. Bentinck's political opinions, we cannot but admire the boldness with which he recently expressed himself on this subject, at a time when the popular feeling was running strongly in the opposite direction.

We turn next to the leading questions of our *internal administration*.

The subject of criminal codification or of digesting the statute and common law for all purposes of criminal jurisdiction, has recently made a decided progress, both in theory and practice. The superstitious terror with which a code used to be regarded, as something foreign and dangerous, has nearly given way, among the bar and the public, to a more enlightened view of the advantages of legislative simplicity and order. The difficulty has been to obtain a well-constructed and complete digest of our miscellaneous and scattered law; but this difficulty has, to a great extent, been overcome by the useful labours of the Criminal Law Commissioners. A criminal code, in the form of a bill, was laid upon the table of the House of Lords by Lord Brougham, two sessions ago, but no steps were taken for its consideration. To discuss a code of this kind, article by article, in committee, in both Houses of Parliament, would be a simple impossibility. If such a compilation is ever to receive the sanction of our legislature, it can only be done by some departure from the ordinary mode of discussion.

The desire for the abolition of capital punishments appears to have received a check from experience; and it seems to be generally admitted that, for the present at least, we have gone sufficiently far in the mitigation of punishments. It is likewise now understood that *certainly* is the most material element in the punishment of crime: hence the institution of trial by jury for criminal offences has of late been sometimes spoken of without that language of hyperbolical admiration which had usually been consecrated to its praise. We are not blind to the practical advantages which trial by jury, after long habit, produces in this country, even in the ordinary administration of justice; and we are fully sensible of the protection which it has

formerly afforded to the subject, in political cases, against the power of the Crown. But because trial by jury may be a palladium of liberty in prosecutions for treason, sedition, riot, political libel, and other questions between the government and the people; it does not follow that this mode of trial is attended with any advantages in indictments for burglary or larceny, and in actions of assumpsit or ejectment. Nobody ever complained of the Court of Chancery for its subservience to the Crown, when deciding between the rights of litigants; although this Court was not only never assisted by a jury, but was subject to the further anomaly of being presided over by a judge, who, on becoming the first judicial magistrate in the realm, is yet not expected, on that account, to cease to be a party politician. Certainly, if it were now proposed, for the first time, to take twelve individuals at random from the community—to give them practically, under the form of a general verdict, supreme authority over both law and fact, in civil and criminal trials, being persons necessarily without any legal experience, and any sense of corporate responsibility—and as an additional security for a just decision, to require that these twelve men should be locked up without food until they were unanimous in their opinion, such a proposition could not be expected to meet with a very favourable reception. With respect to secondary punishments and transportation, we refer to the article in our July number, where the subject was fully considered (No. 173. art. 10.). The aim of the government in converting transportation into a sort of penal exile, to be added to a term of imprisonment at home, seems to us right; about the mode of giving effect to it, difference of opinion may reasonably exist.

By the change effected in last session the administration of the *Poor Law* has obtained a direct representation in parliament, and has been connected with the government by a political tie; so that the responsibility of the ministry for the acts of the commission, and the responsibility of the commission itself to parliament, will henceforth be clear and undoubted. This change was rendered necessary by the recent misunderstandings in parliament respecting the proceedings and management of the Poor Law Commission, which gave to the administration of the poor law in the country an appearance of unpopularity and disorder which was quite unreal. No alteration has taken place in the powers of the commission, or in its relation to the Boards of Guardians; nor has any change been made in the system of relief in England. The discussions of last session on the Irish Poor Law have tended to show the advantages of the mixed system of workhouse and out-door relief established in England,

and to confirm it in the opinion of parliament and the public; nor do we anticipate any proposal for its modification. The evils of the law of Parochial Settlement have, however, begun to make themselves understood, as well as felt; and after the full investigation which the subject received from the select committee of the House of Commons in last session, we look forward to a fundamental change which will release industry from the fetters now imposed upon it by this law, and will, at the same time, create a more equable distribution of the local burden of the poor rate. We trust, likewise, that the alteration of the law of settlement, whenever it takes place, will be accompanied with a reform in the system of valuation for the local taxes: the valuations for these several rates ought, we think, to be consolidated, and placed under the control of a board of magistrates in each county. The influence of the law of settlement upon the condition of the working classes is so important, that we intend, on an early occasion, to consider the subject in a distinct article.

The *factory legislation* of last session, by which the long-demanded limitation of the time of work to ten hours was effected, though considered by many of its supporters as a politic concession to the wishes of the operatives, is not to us a subject of satisfaction. We stated fully, in a former number, our reasons for disapproving of a limitation of the hours of work for free adult labourers, which we need not now repeat.\* It seems as if, in the inevitable succession of human delusions and errors, one false system of political economy must be enthroned as soon as another has been deposed, and that the system of commercial protection is to be immediately followed by the system of protection for labour. We fear that the parties interested, and that portion of the public which is captivated by an outward semblance of humanity, will never be convinced of the unsoundness of this novel system by any *à priori* arguments; and that we are destined to run a long career of legislative protection to labour, not confined to manufacturing industry, until actual experience, as in the case of protection to trade, has demonstrated its mischievous operation.

The question of *sanitary regulation* for populous towns has of late occupied a large share of public attention, though not larger than its importance deserves. In London, and other great towns (particularly the growing towns of the manufacturing districts, inhabited by large bodies of the working classes), the

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\* See vol. lxxxiii. p. 88.

arrangements for sewerage and drainage, and the supply of water, exercise a perpetual influence upon the health, comfort, and even morals of the population. We trust that judicious regulations for effecting these useful objects will be agreed to by the legislature. For smaller towns and villages such sanitary measures are less needed, and there would be little advantage in subjecting the municipal authorities to external control. The interference of a central authority with the local administration of sewers and other sanitary matters, is a question of great difficulty, particularly in the metropolis, where we rejoice to see that the subject is to be investigated by a special commission; and we cannot but think that the government has been unjustly blamed for postponing their bill of last session, the continued discussion of which only served to show the number and variety of interests to be affected by the proposed enactment.

The *internal communications* of a country always constitute one of the main branches of its public economy; and at this moment they are a subject of peculiar interest and solicitude, inasmuch as they have been, or are in the course of being, revolutionised by the universal diffusion of steam railways. The transfer of the traffic on all the main lines of communication from the turnpike roads to the newly-constructed railways has materially diminished the produce of the turnpike tolls, and has rendered many trusts nearly incapable of maintaining their roads and paying the interest on their debt. A general measure for England, similar to that for South Wales, by which the Rebecca disturbances were effectually pacified, seems to be desirable, and indeed almost inevitable. At the same time, steps should be taken for consolidating into larger districts the management of the parish highways, which is now costly and ineffective.

The extent to which the management of railways for passengers shall be subject to the control of a government authority is a question which will, we presume, come on for discussion in the present session of parliament. That *some* control should be exercised by the government over these mighty engines of transport seems to be generally conceded. We confess that we can see no strong reason for so extensive an interference with the discretion of the boards of directors as appears to have been at times contemplated by persons whose feelings have been powerfully affected by the recent details of some railway accident; and we decidedly think that the management of steam-vessels for passengers requires the control of the government quite as much as the management of railways. It is to be regretted that

no person, having a special and professional acquaintance with the subject, has attempted to investigate the practical question of the proper extent of government control over railways and steam navigation.

In *commercial legislation* our ulterior progress has been checked by the very cause which, in 1846, gave it so strong an impulse. If to the potato failure and the Irish famine we owe the repeal of the corn laws, and the accompanying reforms of the tariff, to the same causes we must trace the increased public expenditure, and (in part) the disturbance of trade and private credit which have since taken place, and have paralysed all commercial reform. The public revenue has, till lately, kept up, in a remarkable manner, under the most unfavourable circumstances, and has borne a striking testimony to the soundness of the principles adopted in the recent changes. But the necessity for large extraordinary grants to Ireland, the high price of cotton, and the consequent contraction of the cotton manufacture, and the disturbance of trade and credit by the scarcity of food and the enormous speculations in railways, have produced a financial state which does not permit of the reduction of duties, except in cases where it will not be followed by a diminution of revenue. The equalisation of some of the colonial discriminating duties, and the reduction of those duties which are so high as to create systematic smuggling, fall under this latter head. A new relation, which promises to be highly beneficial to all parties, will probably shortly be established between western Africa and the West Indies. The revision of the navigation laws, and the introduction into our maritime code of a less vexatious and narrow-minded spirit than that which animates our present system, is likewise a task which now calls for the exertions of the commercial reformer. With respect to the completion of the work of commercial reform begun by Sir Robert Peel, we exhort the present government to bear in mind the compliment paid to Sixtus V. on the completion of St. Peter's: —

Magnus honos magnæ fundamina ponere templi,  
Sed finem ceptis ponere major honos.

We may add, that a review of our revenue system will be naturally suggested by the questions growing out of the Income Tax, which must, unless it is abandoned, be renewed in the present session.

The subject of *monetary affairs* is too complex and extensive to admit of more than a passing notice in this place. We may, however, state our opinion, that the inordinate speculations in railways, both English and foreign, and the unprecedented

amount of capital which they absorbed, were among the main causes of the late crisis in the money market. The derangement of trade, by the necessity of importing vast supplies of grain, in order to fill the vacuum created by the destruction of the potato crop, likewise contributed to the same end. The storm produced by these concurring causes was sufficient to try severely the soundness of all mercantile and banking establishments, and to sweep away those houses which had subsisted mainly on credit, and whose capital was locked up in distant investments. How far the Bank Charter Act and the conduct of the Bank directors may have assisted in aggravating these difficulties, is a question which will form the subject of investigation by the Select Committees recently appointed by both Houses of Parliament. We will only make this one remark: viz., that if the *currency* had been in an unsound state, and if the law regulating the issue of paper money had been defective, it can scarcely be doubted, that many private and country banks would have shared in the prevailing discredit. The inquiries of the committees just referred to will, we presume, be directed mainly to the *banking* operations of the Bank of England.

We will lastly offer a few remarks upon the present position of the incessantly agitated questions which grow out of the *relation of church and state*.

During the late elections, a powerful movement has been made by the nonconformist body of England against the principle of ecclesiastical endowment, and also in favour of the separation of church and state. This movement, so far as it consisted in an opposition to the endowment of the Irish Roman Catholic clergy, has been seconded by a portion of the Established Church of England, and by the Presbyterians of Scotland of all denominations. The English dissenters have not always been consistent in the grounds of their opposition to the endowment of the Roman Catholic church of Ireland; for they have often spoken of it as an encouragement of error by the state, while at other times they describe endowment as benumbing and paralyzing the truth which it professes to diffuse. For our own part, if we are favourable to the principle of religious endowments, it will not be so much on the ground that they diffuse the endowed creed, as by reason of their tendency to raise the moral character both of the instruction afforded and of the ministering clergy. Not conceiving that parliament is a synod of divines, or that it represents the different churches of this country in their *religious* capacity, we wish to see it apply this principle upon grounds of comprehension similar to those which

were approved of by the Whig school of theologians at the period of the Revolution.

The cause of *national education* has made great progress since 1841; when a certain degree of superintendence over it was lodged in the committee of the privy council. The grant annually voted by parliament is now administered by the committee of council in a sort of partnership with the representatives of the religious body to which the school receiving assistance may belong. This system has at length received the cordial support of the heads of the church of England; whereas the ultra nonconformists repudiate it, as a supposed interference with freedom of belief and conscience. In Ireland, on the other hand, the national system is so administered as to be fair and satisfactory to the Roman Catholics and Presbyterians, by whom it is most needed; but it has hitherto been objected to by the members of the Established Church, who, it may be observed, are in general sufficiently wealthy to educate the children of their own communion without the assistance of the state. If the English dissenters are of opinion that the administration of the grant for education is unduly favourable to the Established Church, their opposition to it is quite intelligible; but we confess we are unable to comprehend the force of the objections which they have made to *all* state assistance for purposes of popular instruction. The patronage of learning, science, and literature has always, from the time of Augustus downwards, been considered one of the main duties and merits of a government: the encouragement afforded to letters has been a standing theme of praise for kings and statesmen for centuries. Universities, high schools, and other institutions for the cultivation of learning, have been systematically supported, both with money and favour, by all European princes. On what ground, therefore, can it be now maintained that the state is to assist in the instruction of the more wealthy, but not in that of the poorer classes; and that it is to promote the discovery of truth, but not to aid in its diffusion?

Whatever remnants of religious intolerance and inequality in civil matters still subsist, are chiefly found lurking in certain religious tests imposed by means of *oaths* and *declarations*. Oaths may perhaps be useful in the administration of justice, and at all events the penalties of perjury, for false evidence, must be retained; but all promissory oaths, on entrance into office and other public functions, are, in our opinion, wholly futile as a security against misconduct, and ought to be swept away.

With respect to the state of the *English Universities*, we regret that the education which they afford should be to so large an extent ecclesiastical, that laymen should not possess

some share in their management, and that they should wear so much the character of mere seminaries for the Anglican Church. The influence exercised by the two great universities, as training schools for a large proportion of the young men of the upper classes, just before their entrance into active life, can scarcely be overrated. From the chambers, we might almost say from the cells of Oxford, has of late years issued the Tractarian or Puseyite School; a school of theology not merely Laudite, for, Laud was decidedly anti-Roman, but essentially attached to the doctrines and discipline of the unreformed Western Church; abhorring every thing which is distinctive of Protestantism, even to its name; seeking to set the Church over the State, and internally desirous of a re-union with Rome. This tendency, wholly unsuited to an age devoted to a spiritual religion, and intolerant of ceremonies and forms in matters both ecclesiastical and civil, has unfortunately spread considerably among the younger clergy, though it has found but little favour among the laity; it has added another to the already numerous grounds of religious discord, and has widened the breach between the Church and the Dissenters.

Out of the antiquarian tendencies of this school, and its sympathies with the church of the Middle Ages, has proceeded a small political sect or connection, which from the age of its principal members has acquired the name of the Young England School. This school bears little resemblance to the corresponding tendencies of the Continent, from which its name was borrowed. Young France, and Young Italy, are democratic, and almost jacobinical; great contemnors of kings and nobles and priests: Young Germany, though more fantastic, and with more historical eccentricities, has at the bottom the same character. But Young England is essentially aristocratic and feudal. It wishes to reconstitute society according to the medieval model: to form a community in which, a king, armed with pre-eminent powers, is surrounded by a few great nobles, who stand at an immeasurable height above the rest of the people. The only other power in the state which the Young Englanders recognise is that of the Church, which they endow richly, surmount with a numerous and well-appointed episcopate, and commit to it, besides its proper religious functions, the cultivation and control of all education, literature, science, art, and public charity. Their speculations are not enounced in a dogmatic form: they come forth disguised in poems, tales of fiction, or plaintive laments over the degeneracy of the present prosaic incredulous age; but their view of society seems not unaptly represented by the Grand Seigneur of the stage, who, with an air of con-



scious superiority, and surrounded by his smiling villagers, distributes marriage portions to some, and rewards to others, to the sound of the pipe and tabret. Every thing that belongs to trade; smoky towns, cotton-mills, manufactures, steam-engines; every thing which concerns that unpoetical order of the community, the middle classes—is an abomination in their sight. For the labouring class, provided it keeps its proper place, they express a strong sympathy. There is, therefore, a varnish of democracy over their aristocratic nucleus. They sympathise with the upper classes—the middle classes they despise:—as to the inferior class, their affections are divided, and they compromise the matter thus. They think that the agricultural labourers should be the contented serfs of the landed aristocracy, but that the operatives should be the masters of the manufacturers. Their manual of political economy appears to be compounded of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, and Southey's *Colloquies of Society*. The teachers of this school do not, indeed, produce any serious practical impression upon the convictions of this hard-headed generation; they do not persuade the world to return to the principles and practice of the fourteenth century; but they deter it, so far as they are able, from governing on principles suited to the nineteenth. They do not so much inculcate a body of positive doctrine, their task is rather to 'perplex and dash maturest councils;' and they succeed to a considerable extent in augmenting the anarchy of opinion, by which the moral world is now so much distracted.

There is a perpetual tendency in political affairs to a reliance upon antiquated maxims; men are prone to apply to the present time, without correction, the formulas which obtained a currency under a former, but different state of things. It is a legal proverb, that '*Cessante ratione, cessat et ipsa lex*;' but the canons of legislation, the *leges legum*, generally survive the causes out of which they originated. For example, there was a time when the Pope wielded a formidable power; when the Protestant Church of this country was in real danger from the machinations of the great Roman Catholic states, and from the treachery of our own kings. During this period, the Whigs wisely took measures to avert the danger; while the Tories became Jacobites, and were intriguing to place a Roman Catholic on the throne. Now that the Pope is powerless, and the Roman Catholic states do not dream of attacking the Protestantism of England, the Tory has taken up the discarded Whig principles of the last century, and talks of the Protestant Succession, the Coronation Oath, and the glorious Revolution of 1688. In like manner (as we have remarked

above), much of our veneration for trial by jury as a mode of settling common indictments and actions in the nineteenth century, is taken from our recollections of the effective protection which it afforded against the overweening power of the Crown in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Thus every generation, in succession, runs a risk of being sacrificed to a sort of after-wisdom, and of being governed by maxims which a former generation rightly adopted, but which are no longer applicable. In the mean time, it is no easy task to apprehend with accuracy the moving panorama of the present. For this purpose, not only an attentive and wide-ranging observation is necessary, but also an active imagination, in order to summon up before the mind a vivid and complete picture of the contemporaneous state of things; and to people the entire circle of the horizon with living objects. Hence the profound remark of Turgot, that, in politics, on account of the slowness with which the rays of fact travel to the eye, it is necessary to *predict the present*.

Nothing would more conduce at present to the public welfare than a prevailing disposition to recognise certain maxims of legislation, not derived from a blind and passive tradition, but forged anew, by actual labour, out of recent facts, and adapted to the exigencies of our modern societies. No mistake can be greater than to suppose that an unchanging is necessarily a conservative policy, or that new dangers can be always averted by old securities. A fortification which was impregnable by the spear and the arrow, may be worthless against cannon. While society is changing its aspect around us, the principles by which society is governed must be renovated by assiduous inspection. It is true, that even if such guides to legislation were generally admitted, there would still be much difficulty in applying them in practice; but discussions in parliament would be more likely to lead to a useful result, if there were more agreement about principles. The present is a favourable time for prosecuting such researches. The fanaticism about political forms, and the tendency to expect that good laws will be produced mechanically by a good constitution of the legislature, is greatly diminished. People have begun to see, that though some governments are nearly always bad, none are always good. There is neither a royal nor a democratic road to perpetual good government. This, however, only renders it the more necessary to use all practicable means for insuring a progressive improvement of our laws and institutions, and not to imitate the sluggish folly of the Roman emperor, of whom Tacitus says, that he thought by postponing the remedies, he could drive off the evils themselves.

ART. V. — *KOSMOS, Entwurf einer Physischen Weltheschreibung*, VON ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT. Ersten Band, Stuttgart und Tübingen. J. G. Cotta'scher Verlag, 1845.

*COSMOS. Sketch of a Physical Description of the Universe.* By ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT, Vol. I. Translated under the superintendence of Lieut. Colonel EDWARD SABINE, R. A., For. Sec. R. S., London. Printed for Longman, Brown, Green, and Longman, Paternoster Row, and John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1846.

**K**OSMOS, the adornment, the orderly arrangement, the ideal beauty, harmony, and grace, of the universe! Is there or is there not in the mind of man a conception answering to these magnificent, these magical words? Is their sound an empty clang, a hollow ringing in our ears, or does it stir up in the depths of our inward being a sentiment of something interwoven in our nature of which we cannot divest ourselves, and which thrills within us as in answer to a spell whispering more than words can interpret? Is this wondrous world of matter and of thought, of object and of subject, of blind force and of moral relation, a one indivisible and complete whole, or a mere fragmentary assemblage of parts, having to each other no inherent primordial relations? If the former, contradiction and ultimate discordance can have no place. All that is to us enigmatical *must* have its solution, however hidden for a while the word which resolves the riddle. All that shocks us as irreconcilable, *must* admit of satisfactory interpretation could we read the character of the writing with ease and fluency. If the latter, Chaos is a reality, Polytheism a truth; since arbitrary, self-existent, and independent Powers must, on that view of the subject, agitate, without end and without hope of final prevalence, the field of Being.

It is something to have put the question in this form, uncomplicated with the idea of responsibility for its answer to any tribunal but that of the pure reason and the inborn feeling. So put, we might well leave it to be decided by the acclamation of the human race, were it not for the healthful and invigorating exercise of our faculties, and the rich enjoyment it affords to pass before us in review those grand features in the constitution of the frame of Nature which render the conclusion irresistible, and invest it with the character of a demonstrated truth rather than that of an admitted opinion.

It is true that to grasp, as by a single mental effort — to embody and realise to our conceptions the UNITY OF NATURE

— to soar so high as to perceive its completeness, and enjoy the fulness of its harmony, is given neither to Man nor to Angel. The feebleness and limitation of our faculties repress such longings as presumptuous, and forbid such flights as impracticable. Yet to spring a little way aloft — to carol for a while in bright and sunny regions — to open out around us, at all events, views commensurate with our extent of vision — to rise to the level of our strength, and, if we must sink again, to sink, not exhausted but exercised — not dulled in spirit but cheered in heart, — such may be the contented and happy lot of him who can repose with equal confidence on the bosom of earth, though for a time obscured by mists, or rise above them into empyrean day.

To some it is given to soar with steadier wing and more sustained energy; to sweep over ampler circles and treasure up the impressions of more varied imagery. To such the ambitious but sublime idea may occur of attempting to throw off, in broad and burning outline, a picture of *THE WHOLE* as it has presented itself to their aspiring conceptions. Far be it from us to reprove such aspirations. Their failures may yet be immeasurably grander than our best successes; and, as we contemplate them, a glimpse, a shadow, may impress itself which may aid us to remodel our own conceptions according to a higher ideal than any we could have formed from our more limited opportunities. Such outlines, struck with a bold hand and true to nature, though confessedly imperfect and partial, suggest in their turn, to imaginative intellects, groupings and combinations of a more recondite and deep-seated order. Transplanted onward, thus, in progressive development from observer to observer, and from mind to mind, with a constant reference to nature and experience as their prototype, it is easy to see how, while gaining in comprehensiveness, they may lose at every transfusion somewhat of their specialty, without a corresponding loss of general truth; and how, thus, a larger and more entire conception of nature in itself may by degrees arise, and come to be recognised as the common property of humanity, the permanent and ennobling inheritance of generation after generation to the end of time.

The difficulties to be encountered in such an attempt are of two opposite kinds; on the one hand that of embracing with distinctness and truth a sufficiently extensive view, on the other that of duly suppressing detail. Such a view of nature, to be in any way successful, ought to be, in the highest possible sense of the word, *picturesque*, nothing standing in relation to itself alone, but all to the general effect. In such a picture every object is suggestive. However beautiful in itself, it is less for the sake

of its intrinsic beauty than for that of the associations it calls up, and the lights which it reflects from afar, that it holds a place as an element of the work. And, as in art, intense and elaborated beauty in any particular defeats picturesqueness by binding down the thought to a sensible object, annulling association, and saturating, as it were, the whole being in its single perception; so, in throwing off such a picture of nature as the mind can take in at a view, no one portion can be suffered to appear in single completeness and ideal rotundity. Nature, indeed, offers all in her profusion, and complete in all its details; and the contemplative mind finds among them paths for all its wanderings, harmonies for all its moods. But such exuberance is neither attainable nor to be aimed at in a descriptive outline, where leading features only have to be seized, which imagination is stimulated to fill up by the grandeur of the forms, and the intelligible order of their grouping.

The origin and fount of all good writing, however, is sound and abundant knowledge. To the successful execution of such a work, a thoroughly scientific acquaintance with each component feature; a mind saturated with information, and at home in every department, is above all things requisite. The classifications of the naturalist, the surveys of the geologist, the catalogues and descriptions of the astronomer, the theories of the geometer, and the inductions of the experimentalist, must all be alike familiar, and not merely ready at a call, but present to the thought at every instant. It is, therefore, by no simply clever writer, by no mere man of vivid imagination and fluent command of language and imagery — least of all, by any ideal speculatist who may have devised a system of philosophy spun from the abstractions of his own brain, and resolving all things into some single principle, some formula embodying all possible knowledge, that such a work can be entered upon without the certainty of utter and disgraceful failure. The highest attainments in science, though necessarily inadequate to complete success in such an attempt, can alone save the adventurous mortal who shall make it from merited reproach on the score of presumption.

The author of the remarkable book before us is assuredly the person in all Europe best fitted to undertake and accomplish such a work. Science has produced no man of more rich and varied attainments, more versatile in genius, more indefatigable in application to all kinds of learning, more energetic in action, or more ardent in inquiry; and, we may add, more entirely devoted to her cause in every period of a long life. At every epoch of that life, from a comparatively early age, he has been

constantly before the public, realising the ideal conception of a perfect traveller; a character which calls for almost as great a variety of excellencies as those which go to realise Cicero's idea of a perfect orator. To such an one science in all its branches must be familiar, since questions of science and its applications occur at every step, and often in their most delicate and recondite forms. The habit of close attention to passing facts, which seizes their specific features, and detects their hidden analogies, must join with the broad *coup d'œil* which generalises all it sees, and stereotypes it in memory in its simplest and most impressive forms. To these must be added a knowledge of man and of his history in all its phases, social and political; a ready insight into human character and feelings, and a quick apprehension of local and national peculiarities. Above all things is necessary a genial and kindly temperament, which excites no enmities, but on the contrary finds or makes friends every where; in presence of which hearts open, information is volunteered, and aid spontaneously offered. No man in the ranks of science is more distinguished for this last characteristic than Baron Von Humboldt. We believe that he has not an enemy. His justice, candour, and moderation, have preserved him intact in all the vexatious questions of priority and precedence which agitate and harass the scientific world; and have in consequence afforded him innumerable opportunities of promoting the objects and befriending the cultivators of science, which would never have fallen in the way of a less conciliatory disposition, and of which he has not been slow to avail himself. The respect of Europe, indeed, has gone along with him to a point which has almost rendered his recommendations rules. It has sufficed that Von Humboldt has pointed out lines of useful and available inquiry, to make every one eager to enter upon them.

The idea of a physical description of the universe, as a work to be accomplished, and an object, to amass materials for which during a whole lifetime, would be a worthy and satisfactory devotion of it, had, it appears, been present to his mind from a very early epoch. For almost half a century, indeed, it had occupied his thoughts. At length, in the evening of life, he felt himself rich enough in the accumulations of thought, travel, reading, and experimental research, to reduce into form and reality the undefined vision which had so long floated before him. Not entirely, however, without some preliminary trial of strength. A course of lectures, as he informs us, had been delivered by him, both in Berlin and Paris, on the subject, about the end of 1827, previous to his departure for Northern Asia,

a journey for which he had prepared himself by a course of study without example in the history of travel. On his return, after giving to the world the results of that journey, or rather the epitome of all the knowledge acquired by himself and by former travellers on the physical geography of Northern and Central Asia, in a work which would alone have sufficed to form a reputation of the highest rank; he resolved no longer to defer this realisation of his early aspirations, and the result has been the work of which the volume now before us is only a commencement.

Though we cannot blame an arrangement which brings any portion of the fruits of M. de Humboldt's labours earlier before us, though aware of the hazard which passing years entail on the ultimate appearance of a work of great extent deferred already so long; and though only too glad to receive by instalments, at the convenience of the author, the payment of a self-imposed debt of such magnitude and value, yet we cannot but consider the publication of the three volumes, of which it is understood the whole will consist, separately and at long intervals, as in many respects unfortunate. Although it is now nearly four years since the work was completed, the second volume is only just on the eve of publication, and the third may possibly be yet longer delayed. Yet no work could have been undertaken, in which it would appear so needful that the impression produced be one and undivided, the unity salient and conspicuous. That the contrary course, though perhaps unavoidable, has been pursued, renders the task of duly appreciating and correctly criticising it doubly difficult; since it is impossible to say to what extent, and in what manner many things, which appear in the light of omissions in the first portions of such a performance, may be supplied in the sequel; or how differently the philosophy of the whole subject may come to be judged as presented by the author on a complete and on a partial view of his entire meaning. This would have been less the case, and the probability of doing injustice to the author's philosophical views greatly diminished, had the general plan of the whole work been chalked out with more precision in the introductory portion, and the nature of the contents of the subsequent volumes indicated in somewhat less vague and general terms than we find them actually to be. And the necessity for thus holding a reserve on our judgments in this respect, while considering that portion of the work which we possess, is the more imperatively pressed upon us, inasmuch as the scope of the proposed third volume as we understand it, seems to us by far the most important in its philo-

sophical bearings, and as that by which the character of the whole as a great philosophical work will of necessity come to be finally judged.

Such, however, we are aware, is not exactly M. de Humboldt's own impression. He must here be allowed to speak for himself: 'The first volume,' he says, 'contains a general view of nature, from the remotest nebulae and revolving double stars, to the terrestrial phenomena of the geographical distribution of plants, of animals, and of races of men; preceded by some preliminary considerations on the different degrees of enjoyment offered by the study of nature and the knowledge of her laws; and on the limits and method of a scientific exposition of the physical description of the universe. I regard this as the most important and essential portion of my undertaking, as manifesting the intimate connexion of the general with the special, and as exemplifying, in form and style of composition, and in the selection of results taken from the mass of our experimental knowledge, the spirit of the method in which I have proposed to myself to conduct the whole work. In the two succeeding volumes I design to consider some of the particular incitements to the study of nature, — to treat of the history of the contemplation of the physical universe, or the gradual development of the idea of the concurrent action of natural forces (*Kräfte*), co-operating in all that presents itself to our observation; and lastly, to notice the specialities of the several branches of science, of which the mutual connexion is indicated in the general view of nature in the present volumes.'

A large portion (nearly one-fifth of the text) of the volume before us, is occupied with an introductory exposition of the various kinds or gradations of enjoyment afforded by the contemplation of nature and the investigation of her laws, and with an essay on the limitation and methodical treatment of a physical description of the universe considered as a separate and independent science — 'the science of the *Kosmos*.' The micro aspect of nature, as has been often and well observed, is a source of positive and high enjoyment; and exercises, even on rude minds, and under the sway of wild passions, if only suffered to claim attention at all, a calming and elevating influence. In all her scenes, 'there is everywhere revealed to the mind an impression of the existence of comprehensive and permanent laws governing the phenomena of the universe;' before the idea of whose vastness and regularity the turbulence of human passion feels itself reprov'd and shrinks abashed. Whatever be the peculiar inherent or temporary character of the scene contemplated — even in her most agitated moods — this sense of



the regulated and the imperturbable is never wholly effaced. We know that the storm will rage itself to rest, the angry billows subside, the earthquake roll away, and that holy calm which is her habitual mood be restored as if it had never been broken. 'That which is grave and solemn in such impressions is derived from the presentiment of order and of law, unconsciously awakened by the simple contact with external nature; it is derived from the contrast of the narrow limits of our being with that image of infinity which everywhere reveals itself—in the starry heavens, in the boundless plain, or in the indistinct horizon of the ocean.'

Enjoyment of a different, and, in some respects, of a richer, because of a less overwhelming and more exciting kind, is that which depends on the peculiar physiognomy of natural scenes. Harmonising, like music, with internal trains of thought and imagination, and with every conceivable state of mind, they awaken of themselves, as soon as presented, sentiments congenial to them, and lead the spirit, by strong associative links, through every phase of feeling. The barren monotony of one region, the varied fertility of another, the gloomy and romantic horrors of a third—the peaceful dwelling rising by the torrent's side—the misty region, where the mule seeks his track amid eternal snows—the tropical night, 'when the stars, not sparkling as in our climates, but shining with a steady beam, shed on the gently heaving ocean a mild and planetary radiance,'—the deep and doubly wood-clothed valleys of the Cordilleras—the volcanic peak cleaving the clouds, from a base of vineyarded slopes and orange-groves washed by a tropical sea—the dense forest, of giant and primeval growth, swarming with every form of vegetable and animal life, now resounding to savage yells, and now to the thunder-clap, extinguishing and crushing down all other sound,—these and a thousand other combinations find each its response in some train of human emotions and affections, which, like the lyre of Timotheus, they by turns excite and soothe.

As the poetical enjoyment of nature springs out of this its endless variety, so, on the other hand, the unity of plan, which even uncultivated minds fail not to recognise amid so much diversity, calls forth the latent germ of the philosophic spirit. When—

'—far from our native country, after a long sea voyage, we tread for the first time the lands of the tropics, we experience an impression of agreeable surprise in recognising, in the cliffs and rocks around, the same forms and substances, similar inclined strata of schistose rocks, the same columnar basalts which we had left in

Europe: this identity, in latitudes so different, reminds us that the solidification of the crust of the earth has been independent of the differences of climate. But these schists and these basalts are covered with vegetable forms of new and strange aspect. Amid the luxuriance of this exotic flora, surrounded by colossal forms of new and unfamiliar grandeur and beauty, we experience (thanks to the marvellous flexibility of our nature) how easily the mind opens to the combination of impressions connected with each other by unperceived links of secret analogy. The imagination recognises in these strange forms nobler developments of those which surrounded our childhood; the colonist loves to give to the plants of his new home names borrowed from his native land; and these strong untaught impressions lead, however vaguely, to the same end as that laborious and extended comparison of facts, by which the philosopher arrives at an intimate persuasion of one indissoluble chain of affinity binding together all nature.'

One word on this last sentence:—Is it really true, that the uninstructed mind of man, thus turned loose upon nature, *does* spring, as a matter of course, to just conclusions? *Are* his homely analogies always apposite? his extempore classifications correct? his rude inductions legitimate? If so, what need of study and research? How is it, then, that we are to understand what is here intimated, and is there any sense in which it can be received as true? No doubt there is so. There are truths so large, so general, so all pervading, that they make a part of all our experience, mix with our whole intellectual being, and imbue all our judgments, erroneous as well as correct; in this sense, at least, that we never err so far as to place ourselves in conscious opposition to them. Distorted and perverted as such truths may be in their enunciation, by their mixture with extraneous error, we find them still outstanding, redeeming by their presence, and even consecrating, that error, by placing themselves in prominent and ostentatious union with its dogmas. No absurdity would ever obtain a moment's credence, but for the presence in it of some saving particle of one of these great natural truths.

But it is to the instructed only that the contemplation of nature affords its full enjoyment, in the development of her laws, and in the unveiling of those hidden powers which work beneath the surface of things, and which, operating as physical causes, lead back the mind in the chain of causation, through the phenomena of organised life, to powers of a higher order; which, connecting themselves with the idea of Will, involve the conception of Intelligence, from which we are necessarily led to infer Design, and from Design find ourselves forced on the conclusion of Motive. It is thus, and thus only, that the contemplation of

nature can be said to lead us up, by legitimate induction, to its Author, — to so much of his character, at least, as he has thought fit to reveal to us through his works. But, that it may do so, we must educate our perceptions by practice and habit, till we learn to disregard specialties, whether of objects or laws, and see rather their relations and connexions, their places in a system, their fulfilment of a purpose, their adaptation to an interminable series of intersubservient ends. And this we must endeavour to do without losing sight of the objects themselves, which come at length to stand in intellectual relation to these more spiritualised conceptions, as the notion of substance does to that of quality in some of our older metaphysical theories, — as that substratum of being in which such conceptions inhere, and which serves to bind them together, give them a body, and coerce them from becoming altogether vague and imaginary. And, moreover, we must be careful to raise up no self-created phantasms of our own minds, interposing an impassable barrier to further progress, and cutting off the chain of connexion by a stern *ne plus ultra*. As the distinction drawn in the Aristotelian Philosophy between celestial and terrestrial motions operated for ages to cut off the possibility of arriving at any just views of the Planetary System, so it is perfectly conceivable that, by gratuitous assumptions of another kind, we may wilfully sever ourselves from the possible attainment of knowledge of a far higher order. Against certain notions of this description, which have obtained, or may be obtaining, currency; and others which, without being expressed in words, appear to be extensively, though tacitly, received in science, we consider it worth while to enter our protest: —

The first is, 'that ancient belief, that the forces inherent in matter, and those which regulate the moral world, exert their action under the government of a primordial necessity, and in recurring courses of greater or less period. It is this necessity, this occult but permanent connexion, this periodical recurrence in the progressive development of forms, of phenomena and of events, which constitute nature, obedient to the first-imparted impulse of the Creator. Physical science, as its name imports, limits itself to the explanation of the phenomena of the material world by the properties of matter. All beyond this belongs, not to the domain of the physics of the universe, but to a higher class of ideas. The discovery of Laws, and their progressive generalisations, are the objects of the experimental sciences.' (Transl. p. 33.)

The frame of nature, moral as well as physical, according to this idea, is a piece of mechanism, which wound up and set

going, has been abandoned to itself, to evolve its changes in variously superposed periods, without choice or option, according to the combinations of an occult wheelwork. If, indeed, there were no such phenomenon as Will; if we were conscious of being thus blindly hurried along by the uncontrollable swing of the system of which we form a part, at every moment and in every action, such a system might be tenable. Periods of unknown length, superposed according to no discoverable law, lose their character of periodicity to the eye of the observer; and *periods of event*, apart from the notion of the measurement of time, similarly superposed, resolve themselves, so far as observation is concerned, into that imperfect and inadequate idea of causation which considers it as simply a determinate rule of sequence. But *Will*, admitted into any part of such a system, destroys the whole of it. The blind, unintelligent portions of the mechanism must be invested with the power, and be urged by the necessity of conforming themselves to that will, as to the original impulse which set the whole in motion; and how are we then to distinguish between those evolutions which result from a will of which we are conscious, and those which, for aught we know, may be continually resulting from a will continually in action, though concealed from our knowledge and perception?

Another notion, equally destitute, in our eyes, of positive foundation, but much more likely than the former to act prejudicially in limiting the progress even of physical knowledge, is the assumption, as old as Aristotle, that all the phenomena of nature are referable to *motions* performed in obedience to what we are in the habit of calling *mechanical* laws; that, in other words, there is no such thing as *qualitative change* unaccompanied by change of place — no causation at work other than mechanical push and pull. It is high time, we think, that this assumption should be formally called in question. We are disposed to believe that science has outgrown it. At the same time, we are quite aware into what a licentious career of wild speculation the mind is ready to rush on the removal of such a limitation; what extravagant theories we must expect to see broached, and what confusion of ideas, nay, what positive charlatanries, we must be prepared to encounter, before any clear and definite conception can emerge from the mass of images which crowd upon us on the suggestion of such a change of ground. We may indicate, however, one or two, which may perhaps carry with them some degree of distinctness, viz.: first, The intension, remission, or creation of mechanical force dependent on the presence or absence of agents, such as electricity and heat, of whose *materiality*, in the usual sense of the word, we have no

proof, seeing that inertia (at least, in the case of heat) forms no part of our conception of them; and secondly, the successive *quasi-undulatory* propagation of qualities — powers of affecting either the senses or material bodies by something different from mechanical impulse. It is perfectly true, that on the properties of matter only we must rely for the explanation of physical phenomena. But we conceive that those properties are only just beginning to become known to us, that we shall have to reject some which have been assumed as unquestionable, and that it is by no means improbable, that science will ere long make us familiar with others, calculated to stretch to the utmost our conception of *material* existence. Entertaining this expectation, we must here, once for all, observe, that the continual use of the word *forces* in the work before us, in such phrases as ‘the forces of nature’ — ‘the concurrent action of natural forces’ — grates with something approaching to a painful harshness on our ears. We should be inclined to substitute for it, wherever it occurs, the expression ‘physical powers,’ a sense which the German *Kräfte* might bear, we think, without violence.

A third dogma, which has of late been placed in prominence, much, as we conceive, to the detriment of sound philosophy, is that of the so called, or rather mis-called, *positive philosophy* — an extravagant and morphological transformation of that rational empiricism, which professes to take experience for its basis; resulting from insisting on the prerogatives of experience in reference to external phenomena, and ignoring them in relation to the movements and tendencies of our intellectual nature: — a philosophy which, if it do not repudiate altogether the idea of causation, goes far, at least, to put it out of view, and with it, everything which can be called *explanation* of natural phenomena, by the undue predominance assigned to the idea of Law: — which rejects as not merely difficult, not even simply hopeless, but as utterly absurd, unphilosophical, and derogatory, all attempt to render any rational account of those abstract equation-like propositions, in which it delights to embody the results of experience, other than their inclusion in some more general proposition of the same kind. Entirely persuaded that, in physics, at least, the inquiry into causes is philosophy; that nothing else is so; and that the chain of causation upwards is broken by no solution of continuity, constituting a gulph absolutely impassable to human faculties, if duly prepared by familiarity with the previous links; we are far from regarding the *whole* office of experimental philosophy as satisfactorily expressed, by declaring it to consist in the discovery and generalisation of laws. There are two ways of expressing every law

of nature,—one which does, the other which does not, bear reference to the cause, which lies at the root of the phenomenon. It is something distinct from, and more than a mere generalisation of law, which refers the planetary motions to *Force* as a Cause of motion. No acuteness would ever have sufficed to conclude the laws of perturbation from those of elliptic motion, and to detect a new planet by the mere knowledge of these latter laws, had this word, the key of the whole riddle, remained unpronounced. The craving of the philosophic mind is for *explanation*, i. e. for the breaking up of complex phenomena into *familiar* sequences, or equally familiar transitional changes, or cotemporary manifestations; which, under the names of cause and effect, we are content to receive (at least temporarily) as ultimate facts, and which nothing but perfect familiarity divests of that marvellous character which they really possess,—*which are only not looked upon as miraculous because they are usual*. When we work our way up to facts of this character, physical inquiry ends, and speculation begins. Very few such ultimate facts have hitherto been arrived at in physics; and it is to the increase of their number, by future inquiry, that we must look for any prospect of erasing any one of them from the list, i. e. of explaining it. No doubt explanation must ever be imperfect, if quantitative laws be wanting as a feature. But the first, at least the most necessary office of experimental philosophy, is, the detection of the *influential thing*, the *ultimate fact*, or facts, on which explanation hinges—its subsequent, and, in that sense, subordinate, though still most useful and important one; to discover the formal and quantitative laws of that influence. If, indeed, it be said, that the proposition announcing these ultimate facts is *a law*, in the sense of the word intended, we protest against the abuse of language, which confounds, under one form of expression, the detection of the law itself, and the subject matter of the law—the *quod loquimur*, with the *de quo*.

With the richness of idea and command of resource which natural knowledge confers, civilisation goes hand in hand. The remarks of M. de Humboldt on this part of his subject are so pointed and impressive, that we cannot refuse ourselves the pleasure of quoting them:—

‘The clearer our insight into the connexion of phenomena, the more easily we shall emancipate ourselves from the error of those who do not perceive that, for the intellectual cultivation and for the prosperity of nations, all branches of natural knowledge are alike important, whether the measuring and describing portion, or the examination of chemical constituents, or the investigation of the physical

forces by which all matter is pervaded. . . . An equal appreciation of all parts of natural knowledge is an essential requirement of the present epoch, in which the material wealth and the increasing prosperity of nations are in great measure based on the more enlightened employment of natural products and forces. . . . The most superficial glance at the present condition of European states shows that those which linger in the race cannot hope to escape the partial diminution, and, perhaps, the final annihilation of their resources. . . . The danger . . . must be averted by the earnest cultivation of natural knowledge. . . . Knowledge and thought are at once the delight and the prerogative of man; but they are also a part of the wealth of nations, and often afford to them an abundant indemnification for the more sparing bestowal of natural riches.'

To all this, of course, we heartily subscribe; and we only wish that the limit M. de Humboldt has prescribed to himself would have permitted him to extend the scope of his remarks, clothed, as they are, in such animated language, to embrace a far wider range of application. The frame of Nature is not bounded by that narrow limit which is commonly understood by the term *Physics*. Life, thought, and moral and social relation, are all equally *natural* — equally elements of the great scheme of the *Kosmos* with matter and magnetism. The only imaginable reason why the sciences growing out of these ideas are not regarded and handled, or have not hitherto effectually been so, as branches of natural science and inductive inquiry, is the great difficulty of arriving at true statements of facts in some, owing to the conflict of partial interests, and the great danger and consequent heavy responsibility attending experiments in others. These obstacles can only be removed by the general enlightenment of mankind, enabling them to perceive that their true interests require truth in the statement of facts; deliberate caution in undertaking, and patience — long, calm, enduring patience — and hearty co-operation, in watching the working out of social and legislative experiments.

A great and wondrous attempt is making in civilized Europe at the present time: neither more nor less than an attempt to stave off, *ad infinitum*, the tremendous visitation of war; and, by removing or alleviating the positive checks to the growth of population, to diminish the stringency of the preventive ones, and to subsist continually increasing masses on a continually increasing scale of comfort. May it be successful! But the only conditions on which it can be so are, that nature be laid yearly more and more under contribution to human wants; and that the masses themselves understand and go along with the exertions making in their favour in a spirit of amicable and rational conformity. To no other quarter than to the progress

of science can we look for the least glimpse of a fulfilment of the first of these conditions. Neither the activity of hope, nor the energy of despair, acting by stationary means on unvarying elements, can coerce them into a geometrically increasing productiveness. Science must wave unceasingly her magic wand, and point unceasingly her divining rod. The task now laid on her, however, is not of her own seeking. She declines altogether so dread a responsibility, while yet declaring her readiness to aid, to the utmost of her powers; claiming only the privilege, essential to their available exertion, of free, undisturbed, and dispassionate thought, and calling upon every class to do its duty; the higher in aiding her applications, the lower in conforming to her rules.

In that part of his work which treats of the limits and method of exposition of the physical description of the universe, M. de Humboldt takes considerable pains to represent the 'Science of the Kosmos' as a separate and independent department of knowledge, distinct in scope and kind from a mere encyclopædic aggregation of physical sciences. We concern ourselves little whether in this he have succeeded in making out a useful and available distinction; admitting, as he does, that in his mode of conceiving and handling it, it is, in effect, the aggregate, by simple juxtaposition, of two separate and very unequal portions, similar in character so far as the *less* can be similar to the *more* complex. He regards it, in short, as physical geography enlarged by such a description of the heavens and their contents as shall correspond in plan and in conception (so far as our knowledge extends) to that description of the earth and its denizens which is intended by the former designation. In so far, then, as physical geography is entitled to be termed a separate and independent science, Kosmography, or the science of the Kosmos, is so also, and a more general one, including the other. A Chinese map of the globe *is* a map of the globe, and not a mere map of China, though the Flowery Land figure therein in rich detail of city, stream, and province; and though Europe, Asia, Africa, and America exist, for the most part, in mere outline, and occupying an extent of surface altogether disproportioned to their true extent and importance. This is not the fault of the Celestial Arrowsmith. Had he known more of the globe, he would have given his countrymen a better map.

Our simile, however, is faulty in one respect. What we know of the contents of space exterior to our globe we at least know truly, — at all events, we can separate our knowledge from our ignorance; and it happens, fortunately, that what escapes our view is precisely that which, if seen, would merely



serve to puzzle and perplex us; while the great and obvious features which strike us are precisely those which we are best able to reduce to general laws, and to view in systematic connexion, and which reveal to us, in its grandest form, the Unity of the *Kosmos*. The all-pervading power of gravitation, that mysterious reality by which every material being in the universe is placed in *instant* and influential relation with every other, springs forward in a state of disengagement and prominence on the contemplation of the celestial movements which it, perhaps, might never have assumed had not the opportunity been afforded us of so contemplating it, apart from the distracting influence of corpuscular forces which, in innumerable instances, mask and overlies it in its exhibition on the surface of our planet. And again: the phenomenon of light, its uniform properties and equal velocity from whatever quarter of space it reaches us, and the certainty those properties afford of the existence of a perfectly uniform mechanism, coextensive with space itself, continually occupied in the discharge of the most important of all offices, that of conveying at once information and vital stimulus from every region of space to every other — facts of this kind, were there no other, would suffice to force upon our minds the clear perception of a unity of plan and of action in the constitution of nature. ‘A connexion is maintained, by means of light and radiant heat, both with the sun of our own system, and all those remoter suns which glitter in the firmament. The very different measure of these effects must not prevent the physical philosopher, engaged in tracing a general picture of nature, from noticing the connexion and coextensive dominion of similar forces.’ (*Kosmos*, p. 146., Transl.)

We therefore entirely agree with our author in the propriety of that arrangement of his work which gives the precedence of treatment to the celestial over the ‘telluric’ view of nature; and prefaces the description of our own globe by that of the sidereal and planetary system. And whether such description be properly regarded as the exposition of a body of science, or (as we should rather feel disposed to look upon it) a sort of epos, a noble oratorio, or a grand *spectacle*, we are delighted to receive it at his hands, and to throw ourselves into that frame of mind for its reception which shall be best calculated to heighten the impression, and do justice to the exponent.

Taking our stand, therefore, on the extreme verge of the visible creation, let us for an instant look about us, ere we descend with him, like the angelic messenger in Milton, through stars, nebulae, and systems, to this planetary sphere and its central sun. Where are we? Is there such an extreme

verge? This question, which lies at the very threshold of an exposition of the *Kosmos*, *per descensum*, is one which has so little to recommend it as a matter of discussion that we certainly should not mention it here, had it not got involved in an astronomical speculation of a very singular nature. The assumption that the extent of the starry firmament is literally infinite has been made, by one of the greatest of astronomers, the late Dr. Olbers, the basis of a conclusion that the celestial spaces are in some slight degree deficient in *transparency*; so that all beyond a certain distance is, and must for ever remain, unseen; the geometrical progression of the extinction of light far outrunning the effect of any conceivable increase in the power of our telescopes. Were it not so, it is argued, every part of the celestial concave ought to shine with the brightness of the solar disc; since no visual ray could be so directed as not, in some point or other of its infinite length, to encounter such a disc. With this peculiar form of the argument we have little concern. It appears to us, indeed, with all deference to so high an authority, invalid; since nothing is easier than to imagine modes of systematic arrangement of the stars in space (entirely in consonance with what we see around us of the principle of subordinate grouping actually followed out) which shall strike away the only foundation on which it can be made to rest, while yet fully vindicating the absolute infinity of their number. It is the conclusion only which it appears to us important to notice, as having recently been attempted to be established on grounds of direct statistical enumeration of stars of different orders of brightness, by the illustrious astronomer of Pulkova, in a remarkable work (*Études d'Astronomie Stellaire*), and even some rude approximation made to the rate of extinction. It would lead us far beyond our limits to attempt even to give a general idea of his reasonings, but one remark on the whole subject we cannot forbear. Light, it is true, is easily disposed of. Once absorbed, it is extinct for ever, and will trouble us no more. But with radiant heat the case is otherwise. This, though absorbed, remains still effective in heating the absorbing medium, which must either increase in temperature, the process continuing, *ad infinitum*, or, in its turn becoming radiant, give out from every point at every instant as much heat as it receives.

Of the supposed luminiferous æther itself, as one of the material or quasi-material contents of space, M. de Humboldt says nothing. He waives, designedly, at least in the present volume, any allusion to that, and all other theoretical conceptions. The view of creation which he takes, and which we must take with

him, is so purely and entirely objective, so closely confined to what Mr. Mill would call the *collocations* of the *Kosmos*, that even the Newtonian law of gravitation, with its noble train of mathematical consequences, is excluded from all direct and special notice. We must not, therefore, wonder, but accept it as part of the determinate plan of the work, that light itself is spoken of only incidentally, as affording a measure of sidereal distance by its velocity, and as conveying to our eyes the images of remote sidereal objects, not as they now exist, but as they existed years or ages ago; or that no account is given of the Gaussian generalisations of the theory of terrestrial magnetism, — a subject, of which M. de Humboldt is so pre-eminently cognisant, that it must have required the greatest self-control, and the most entire satisfaction with his pre-conceived views of the limits of his subject, to have avoided dilating on it.

The most remote bodies which the telescopes disclose to us are, probably, the nebulae. These, as their name imports, are dim and misty-looking objects, very few of which are visible to the unassisted sight. Powerful telescopes resolve most of them into stars, and more in proportion to the force of the instrument; while, at the same time, every increase of telescopic power brings fresh and unresolved nebulae into view. A natural generalisation would lead us to conclude, that all such objects are nothing but groups of stars, forming systems, differing in size, remoteness, and mode of aggregation. This conclusion would, indeed, be almost irresistible but for a few rare examples, where a single star of considerable brightness appears surrounded with a delicate and extensive atmosphere, offering no indication of its consisting of stars. Such objects have given rise to the conception of a self-luminous nebulous matter, of a vaporous or gaseous nature, of which these photospheres, and, perhaps, some entire nebulae, may consist, and to the further conception of a gradual subsidence or condensation of such matter into stars and systems. It cannot be denied, however, that the weight of induction appears to be accumulating in the opposite direction, and that such 'nebulous stars' may, after all, be only extreme cases of central condensation, such as two or three 'nebulae,' usually so called, offer a near approach to. Apart, then, from these singular bodies, and leaving open the questions they go to raise, and apart from the consideration of such peculiar cases as planetary and annular nebulae, the great majority of nebulae may be described as globular or spheroidal aggregates of stars arranged about a centre, the interior strata more closely than the exterior, according to very various laws of progressive density, but the strata of equal density being more nearly

spherical according to their proximity to the centre. Many of these groups contain hundreds, nay, thousands, of stars.

Besides these, there exist nebulae of a totally different description; of vastly greater apparent dimension, and of very irregular and capricious forms, of which the well-known nebula in Orion is an example. They form, evidently, a class apart from the others, not only in aspect, but also as regards their situation in the heavens; for whereas the former congregate together chiefly in a great nebulous district remote from the Milky Way, or are otherwise scattered over the whole heavens, (though by no means so as to form what M. de Humboldt terms a 'nebulous milky way,' or zone of nebulae surrounding the sphere,) these only occur in the immediate vicinity of the galaxy, and may fairly be considered, if not as integrant portions, at least as outliers of it. Their forms, therefore, may be considered as in some degree indicative of the true form of that starry stratum, could we contemplate it from a distance, so far, at least, that we may reasonably suppose it quite as irregular and complex as we observe these, its appendages, actually to be.

M. de Humboldt leans, as might be expected from one especially conversant with organic forms, to that view which represents the nebulae as sidereal systems, in process of gradual formation by the mutual attraction of their parts, and by the absorption of the strictly nebulous element into stellar bodies. 'The process of condensation,' he says, 'which was part of the doctrine of Anaximenes, and of the whole Ionic school, appears to be here going on before our eyes. The subject of conjoint investigation and conjecture has a peculiar charm for the imagination. Throughout the range of animated existence, and of moving forces in the physical universe, there is an especial fascination in the recognition of that which is becoming, or about to be, even greater than in that which is, though the former be indeed no more than a new condition of matter already existing; for of the act of creation itself, the original calling forth of existence out of non-existence, we have no experience, nor can we form any conception of it.'

That the whole firmament of stars visible to us, even with the help of telescopes, belongs to that vast sidereal stratum which we call the Galaxy, seems hardly to admit of doubt. The actual form of this stratum, further than that it is not improperly characterised as such, can hardly be said to be known with any approach to certainty; but that its extent in a direct line outwards is enormously greater in some directions than in others, and that in one portion of its extent it is, as it were, cleft, and contorted, in others lengthened into processes stretch-

ing far into space, seems to rank among the positive conclusions of astronomy. In certain directions its extent would seem to be unfathomable to our best telescopes; in others, there is reason to believe we see through and beyond it, even in its own plane.

Of the distance of the stars of which this vast stratum consists, at least of some of the nearest of them, we are beginning, at length, to possess some certain knowledge. The bright star  $\alpha$  Centauri has a measured parallax (as the observations of Henderson and Maclear teach us) of nearly a whole second ( $0''.9128$ ), which places it at a distance from us equal to 226,000 radii of the earth's orbit. That of  $\beta$  Cygni has been ascertained by Bessel to be no less than 592,200 such radii, while the observations of Struve place  $\alpha$  Lyre at 789,600 of similar units from our system. Such is the scale of the system to which we belong, such the magnitudes we are led to regard as small, in comparison with its actual extent! The number of stars whose distance is imperfectly known to us at present is about thirty-five, seven of which may be considered as determined, with some approach to certainty, by the recent researches of Mr. Peters.

Among the countless swarm of what are commonly called fixed stars, there is not one, probably, which really merits the name. In by far the great majority, a minute, but regularly progressive, change of place is observed to take place; and, from a careful examination of these movements, as observed in stars visible in Europe, it has been concluded, that a portion at least of them is only apparent, and arises from a real motion of our own sun, carrying with it the whole planetary system, towards a point in the constellation Hercules, in R. A.  $259^{\circ} 35'$  decl.  $34^{\circ} 34'$  north. This extraordinary conclusion, resting as it does on the independent and remarkably agreeing calculations of five different and eminent astronomers, from data afforded by northern stars, has, within the last few months, received a striking confirmation by the researches of Mr. Galloway, who has arrived at the very same conclusion, from calculations founded on the proper motions of stars in the southern hemisphere, not included among those used by his predecessors. In this path the sun moves with the prodigious velocity of 400,000 miles, or nearly its own semi-diameter, *per diem*.

Independent of the movements of translation not accounted for by this cause, several of the stars have a rotary motion, forming pairs or binary systems, called double stars, revolving about each other in regular elliptic orbits, governed by the Newtonian law of gravitation. This sort of connexion, suggested as theoretically probable by Mitchell, and demonstrated

as a matter of observation by Herschel, has now been distinctly traced in fifty or sixty instances (M. de Humboldt, anticipating what will doubtless one day prove to be a fact, says 2800), among which occur examples of periodic revolutions of 200, 182, 117, 61, 44, and even 17 years, and of orbits, in some cases so excentric as to be quite cometary, in others nearly circular. Some again are concluded, with much probability, to revolve on their axes, from the observation of regular periodic changes in their lustre; while others vary in no regular and certain periods, undergoing great and abrupt changes, for which no probable cause has yet been assigned. In one remarkable instance a change of colour would appear to have taken place. Sirius, which is now one of the whitest of the stars, is characterised by Ptolemy as red, or at least ruddy. 'Ο δὲ Σείριος, ὑπόκυρρος, is his expression, speaking pointedly of its colour, and not of its scintillations.

Not the least surprising, is the actual and positive knowledge we have obtained of the *weight* or quantity of matter contained in at least one of the binary stars, 61 Cygni; from whose orbital motion, compared with its distance, Bessel has concluded that the conjoint mass of its two individuals is 'neither much more nor much less than half the mass of our sun.' It appears as a star of the sixth magnitude. From the photometric experiments of Wollaston on  $\alpha$  Lyrae, compared with what we know of its distance, its actual emission of light may be gathered to be not less than  $5\frac{1}{2}$  times that of the sun. Sirius, which is nine times as bright as  $\alpha$  Lyrae, and whose parallax is insensible, cannot, therefore, be estimated at less than 100 suns.

Non-luminous stars have been conjectured to exist, and Bessel even considered that some irregularities, supposed to subsist in the proper motions of Procyon and Sirius, could no other way be accounted for than by supposing them to be revolving about invisible central bodies. The illustrious astronomer of Pulkova, in the work we have already had occasion to cite, has, however, by destroying the evidence of irregularity by a careful revision of all the recorded observations, rendered it unnecessary to resort to such an hypothesis.

Neither have attempts been wanting to deduce from the proper motions of the stars, the situation in space of the 'Central Sun,' about which the whole firmament revolves. Lambert placed it in the nebula of Orion; Maedler, very recently, in the Pleiades, on grounds which, however, appear to us anything but conclusive.

The vast interval which separates our system from its nearest neighbours among the fixed stars, is a blank which even the

imaginations of astronomers have been unable to people with denizens of any definite character, other than a few lost comets slowly groping out their benighted way to other systems, or torpidly lingering in *aphelio*, expecting their recall to the source of light and warmth. In the utter insulation of this huge intervening gulph, it is impossible not to perceive a guarantee against extraneous perturbation and foreign interference, or to avoid tracing an extension of the very same principle of subordinate grouping which secures the satellites of our planets from too violent a perturbative action on the part of the central body. It thus assumes the character and importance of a cosmical law; and, while it affords another and most striking indication of the unity of plan which pervades the universe, may lead us to believe that, if other systems yet exist in the immensity of space, they may be separated from our own by intervals so immense as to appear only as dim and nebulous specks, or utterly, and for ever, to elude our sight.

Descending, now, with our guide through this *vacuum inane* to our own system, we shall for a moment depart from his arrangement to strike at once upon its central body—our own sun. This, indeed, can hardly be called a departure, since, by an extraordinary omission, we find no special notice taken by M. de Humboldt of this magnificent globe. Yet, surely, there is matter of sufficient interest in what is known and seen of its physical constitution and important peculiarities, to have justified, indeed to have required, their not being passed *sub silentio* in a physical description of the universe. If there be much, as yet mysterious, in its inexhaustible emission of light and heat, there is also much in the mechanism by which that emission is produced which is matter of ocular inspection. We know, for instance, that the sun is not simply an incandescent mass; that the luminous process, whatever its nature, is superficial only, being confined to two strata of phosphorescent clouds, floating in an atmosphere of considerable but imperfect transparency, extending to a vast distance beyond them: that these clouds are often driven asunder by tumultuary movements of astonishing energy and extent, disclosing to our eyes the dark surface below; that the region in which these movements take place is confined to an equatorial belt of about sixty degrees in breadth, being, however, comparatively much less frequent in the immediate vicinity of the equator itself. We know, moreover, that the time of its rotation ( $25\frac{1}{2}$  days) stands in decided and pointed dissonance with the Keplerian law of the planetary revolutions, and that therefore the sun has *most certainly not* been formed by the simple subsidence of regularly rotating planetary matter gra-

dually contracting in dimension by cooling; a fact which the advocates of the nebulous hypothesis must, therefore, render some other account of.

The primary planets known to us at the present moment are sixteen in number, including no less than five which have been added to the list since the publication of the *Kosmos* in 1845. The discovery of one of these, Neptune, by the mere consideration of the recorded perturbations of the remotest planet previously known, by the theory of gravitation, as delivered by Newton, and matured by the French geometers, will ever be regarded as the most glorious intellectual triumph of the present age. If any thing could enhance its claim to be so considered, it is the assurance given us of the exceedingly firm grasp by which theory has seized on this most complicated subject; by the fact of the discovery having been made almost simultaneously by two geometers of different nations, pursuing different courses of investigation, each in entire ignorance of the other's proceedings, and arriving at what may fairly be termed the same identical place of the yet unseen planet. It is not a little remarkable that astronomy, the oldest, and, as it might be considered, the maturest among the sciences, is perhaps at this moment the most rapidly progressive of any, such is the novelty as well as the magnitude of the facts which every year brings forth.

M. de Humboldt in this division of his subject, presents us with a rapid, but an extremely striking and well-digested view of the 'collocations' of our system; that is to say, of the actual arrangement and distribution of its masses in respect of their magnitudes, densities, and distances from the sun, their times of rotation on their axes, and the extent of their provision with satellites. We have never met with a better *exposé* of these particulars, grouped as they are under a variety of aspects, with the object of bringing into view the general relations, if any, which exist between them.

'It has been proposed to consider the telescopic planets,' now eight in number, between Mars and Jupiter, 'with their more excentric, intersecting, and greatly-inclined orbits, as forming a middle zone, or group, in our planetary system; and if we follow out this view, we shall find that the comparison of the inner group of planets, comprising Mercury, Venus, the Earth, and Mars, with the outer group, consisting of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus,' (and Neptune), 'presents several striking contrasts. The planets of the inner group, which are nearer the sun, are of more moderate size, are denser, rotate round their respective axes more slowly, in nearly equal periods, differing little from twenty-four hours, are less compressed at the poles, and, with one



exception, without satellites. The external planets . . . . are of much greater magnitude, five times less dense, more than twice as rapid in their rotation round their axes, more compressed at the poles, and richer in moons in the proportion of seventeen' (eighteen) 'to one.'

So soon as we descend to particulars, however, we find these general relations broken in upon by continual exceptions. The history of the discovery of Neptune has afforded a signal instance how little reliance could be placed on a *law of collocation*, which had begun to be considered as a fundamental relation pervading the whole system. Still, as such laws, partially carried out, they possess a peculiar interest, especially when we consider the exactness of numerical relation which holds good in several instances, and which leads irresistibly to speculate upon causes, as is the case with all close numerical coincidences, which nothing can persuade us to believe purely accidental when they take place in matters of fact. *Why*, we are tempted to ask, do the diurnal rotations of Mercury, the Earth, and Mars, agree to a minute? *Why* are the densities of the Sun, Jupiter, Uranus, (and ? Neptune) exactly alike, and just one fourth of the Earth's? Again, among the satellites, *why* are the periodic times of Saturn's third and fourth satellites respectively, *precisely* double those of the first and second? And *why* are the rotations of the satellites, generally, on their axes performed in *precisely* the same times as their revolutions about their respective primaries? Of this last-mentioned coincidence, indeed, a mechanical explanation is given (*Kosmos*, p. 155. Trans.) which we are aware rests on high authority. It pre-supposes, however (which our author does not appear to have recollected), an original, *very near* adjustment to exact coincidence; and even with this admission we remain by no means satisfied of its validity. It appears to us that the very smallest deviation from *perfect* coincidence, originally subsisting, would destroy all tendency to that accumulation of matter on one diameter of the satellite, and consequent permanent elongation of its figure, which the further steps of the so-called explanation require.

By far the most wonderful and mysterious bodies of our system are the comets. Their number is immense, their variety of aspect infinite, their magnitude astounding. Apart from the magnificence of their appearance, and the interest attaching to their eccentric orbits, and utter contempt of the ordinary planetary conventions in their excursions into space, they have become to us instruments of physical inquiry; and the study of their motions has disclosed to us features in the constitution of our system of which we should otherwise have had no idea, and

afforded opportunities, which, but for them, had been altogether wanting of completing our knowledge of the masses of the planets themselves. Their utmost spiritual tenuity enables them to feel as it were, and to manifest by a sensible retardation the resistance of a medium pervading the planetary spaces, while the direction of their tails always turned from the sun, and the enormous velocity with which these singular appendages have appeared on some occasions to be projected in the opposite direction to the solar gravity, has afforded more than a presumption of the existence of repulsive as well as attractive forces in our system. It would be endless to recount the singularities presented by these bodies. Some have had two tails, one (1744) six, and some none at all, though otherwise large and conspicuous: Many have been seen in bright sunshine and at noon-day, as was the case with the recent magnificent one of 1843. The tails of some have equalled, and even surpassed in length, the radius of the earth's orbit; and through those of the comets of 1819 and 1823 the earth itself is supposed to have passed. The funous comet of Lexell passed twice (1767 and 1779) among the satellites of Jupiter, and approached the earth in 1770 within six times the distance of the moon. Several of them return in known periods: the celebrated comet of Halley in 76·871 years; that of Encke in 3·316; that of Biela in 6·599, and that of Faye in 7·29 years. The climax to the bizarreries of these singular bodies was afforded in 1846 by one of these last-mentioned comets (that of Biela), which was actually seen to separate itself into two; which, after thus parting connexion, continued amicably journeying along side by side without further mutual disturbance.

The fall of masses of stone, of iron, and of ashes and other substances from the heavens, is a fact now so thoroughly well attested, that every doubt as to its reality has long since vanished. The latter phenomenon may not unreasonably be attributed to volcanic eruptions, or to matter swept from the surface of the earth by tempests and whirlwinds, carried to a vast height, and deposited at great distances from its origin; and such, indeed, appears to have been the case in many well authenticated instances. We have before us a portion of a sheet of 200 square feet, of a substance exactly similar to cotton felt, and of which clothing might be made, which fell at Carolath, in Sillesia, in 1839. On microscopic examination it is found to consist of delicate matted and bleached *confervæ* containing infusoria; and was therefore, doubtless, raised from its natural site, the dried bed of some lake or marsh, and wafted to the place of its fall by a storm.

But no such explanation will apply to the astounding phenomenon of the sudden fall of blocks of stone or iron of several pounds, nay tons in weight.

'A presumptuous scepticism,' says M. de Humboldt, 'which rejects facts without examination of their truth, is, in some respects, even more injurious than an unquestioning credulity. It is the tendency of both to impede accurate investigation. Although for upwards of 2000 years the annals of different nations had told of falls of stones, which, in many instances, had been placed beyond doubt by the testimony of irreproachable witnesses; although the Bætylia formed an important part of the meteor worship of the ancients, and the companions of Cortes saw, at Cholula, the aerolite which had fallen on the neighbouring pyramid; although caliphs and Mongolian princes had had swords forged of fresh-fallen meteoric iron; and even although human beings had been killed by the falling stones (viz., a friar at Crema on the 4th of September, 1511, a monk at Milan, 1650, and two Swedish sailors on board a ship in 1674); yet, until the time of Chladni, who had already earned for himself imperishable renown in physics by the discovery of his figure-representations of sound, this great cosmical phenomenon remained almost unheeded, and its intimate connexion with the planetary system remained unknown.'

We can pardon some degree of scepticism, on a subject apparently so marvellous, before the assemblage of recorded facts had brought a mass of independent and agreeing evidence to bear upon the general mind, nauseated as it had become by tales of monkish miracle and travellers' wonders. Chladni wrote in 1794, and his work had effectually shaken this scepticism, and excited general attention, when, on the 26th of April, 1803, a shower of stones, thousands in number, and several of them weighing many pounds, was hurled over a district of between twenty and thirty square miles in extent, by the explosion of a globe of fire in mid-day and in a clear sky, vertically over the town of l'Aigle, in Normandy. This was precisely the opportunity to inquire minutely into all the circumstances of the event, and to place them on official record. Accordingly, at the instance of the French Academy of Sciences, the government commissioned M. Biot to proceed to the spot, examine witnesses, and collect every particular. His report on this event, which forms part of the memoirs of the Institute for 1806, leaves no room for doubt as to its reality. Trees were broken, houses struck, the ground ploughed up, the actual stones picked up or dug out in vast abundance. Many persons had narrow escapes, and one was slightly wounded. A list published by Chladni (*Ann. du Bureau des Longitudes*, 1825), enumerates upwards of 200 instances of similar occurrences,

collected from the annals of all nations, China included; among which we observe no less than sixteen recorded in the British Isles subsequent to 1620, one of which (May 18. 1680) took place in London. Subsequent research has added largely to this list, and new occurrences of the kind are continually happening. Many of the masses which have so fallen have been of great magnitude. To say nothing of the enormous weight of some of the blocks of iron supposed to be of meteoric origin; the stone which fell at Ægospotamos was as large as two mill-stones; and that which fell at Narni, A. D. 921, formed a rock projecting four feet above the surface of the river. A mass of this magnitude, so distinct in its nature from the materials of the surrounding rocks, and in a locality so very definite, might surely yet be found by persevering search. Facts of this kind preclude all idea of their being formed in the air from floating vapours, while their difference from all known volcanic products or minerals excludes their reference to a terrestrial origin. Volcanoes in the moon were for a time resorted to, and M. de Humboldt (note 69.) is at some pains to prove this opinion untenable. We believe it to be now entertained by no one. Their planetary nature is the only remaining account which can be given of their origin; and this opinion he of course adopts, classing them with the other admitted members of our system. The phenomena of their explosion, and the violent, though transient and merely superficial heat which they undergo at the moment of their fall, may perhaps be considered as militating against such an origin. But we perceive nothing in these circumstances incompatible with the necessary consequences of such a rencontre. Arriving with planetary velocity at the confines of our atmosphere, where the air is many thousand, perhaps million times rarer than at the surface of the earth, such a body would carry before it the air on which it immediately impinged, compressing it to an enormous *relative* extent against its own surface, before the *absolute* compression could reach such a point as to determine its lateral escape. Now, it has been shown by Poisson (Ann. de Chim. xxiii. 341.) that the latent heat of a given weight of air is greater, the lower the pressure under which it exists. A given quantity (by weight) of air, therefore, at those elevations contains more latent heat than the same quantity at the earth's surface. When condensed, therefore, it will give out *more* heat than would be elicited by the same extent of *relative* condensation from air of ordinary density, which we know to be capable of producing ignition, even under very moderate degrees of sudden compression. A source of sudden and transient heat of almost any conceivable intensity,

is thus provided in immediate contact with the surface of the stone, which it would fuse and partly vaporise, while the sudden and violent expansion of the parts immediately beneath the fused film must necessarily cause decrepitation and disruption of fragments. In short, there is no part of the phenomenon which this explanation does not reach. Mere friction against the atmosphere, as suggested by Poisson, seems quite insufficient to produce incandescence.

That a resemblance should be conceived to exist between those globes of fire which throw down stones and those which only gleam and are extinct, or which terminate with a harmless, though often very terrific explosion, is not to be wondered at. Yet the analogy founded on mere optical resemblance would hardly suffice to prove a community of nature or origin. Accordingly, little or no attempt was made to connect these formidable visitors with the innocuous spectacle afforded by shooting stars or train-accompanied meteors, till 1833, when a brilliant display of the November meteors, on the 12th and 13th of that month, repeated on the same days of the following year, brought to recollection a similar display witnessed by M. de Humboldt in 1799, in America. On comparison of dates, it was perceived, with astonishment, that they precisely coincided. The extraordinary fact has since been established by observation, and by the assemblage of ancient and modern records, that meteoric showers occur *periodically* on certain given days of the year, though not of every year, and especially on the 12th—14th November, and the 9th—11th of August; the latter epoch being the most uniform in respect of the intensity of the phenomenon. Another fact, not less striking, has emerged in respect of the directions affected by the meteors in their flight. They diverge, apparently, from fixed points in the heavens, whose longitudes are  $90^\circ$  in advance of the actual places of the earth in the ecliptic at the epochs in question. Such apparent divergence, by the rules of perspective, is the criterion of a real parallelism; and we are thus carried onwards to the inevitable conclusion of a cosmical origin and common direction of motion, in groups or flights of these bodies, which the earth encounters in its annual path, and which are presumed to form rings or planes more or less interrupted about the sun, revolving according to planetary laws. We agree with M. de Humboldt in considering the general conclusion as perfectly well established, and as justifying his admission of them into the rights of recognised membership of the planetary system.

The zodiacal light is another of those luminous phenomena to which a cosmical origin has always been ascribed:—

'The earliest distinct description' of it 'is contained in Childrey's *Britannia Baconica* (1661). Its first observation may have been two or three years earlier. Dominic Cassini has, however, incontestably the merit of having been the first (in 1683) to investigate its relations in space. . . . It may be conjectured with much probability that the remarkable light, rising pyramidically from the earth, which, in 1509, was seen in the eastern part of the sky for forty nights in succession from the high table land of Mexico (and which I find mentioned in an ancient Aztec manuscript in the Codex Tellerio-Remensis, in the Royal Library at Paris,) was the zodiacal light.' (Transl. p. 189.)

This light, as M. de Humboldt justly reasons, cannot be the solar atmosphere in the ordinary sense of the words. But we cannot so readily admit the conclusion he draws, that it is an extremely oblate *ring* of lucid vapours revolving in space between the orbits of Venus and Mars. An extent much beyond the earth's orbit, at all events, seems incompatible with its pointed or pyramidal form and termination at a certain apparent distance from the sun, instead of being continued all around the heavens. Nor can we perceive any good reason for ascribing to it an annular form, wholly exterior to the orbit of Venus. The passage which he cites from Cassini (note 96.) in support of this opinion appears to us by no means susceptible of this interpretation; nor are we aware of any observations which necessitate such a conclusion, contrary as it is to the opinion generally received on the subject.

Descend we now to our own globe, 'from the region of celestial forms to the more restricted sphere of terrestrial forces; 'from the children of Uranus to those of Gea;' from the contemplation of matter obedient to comparatively few and simple impulses and laws, offering no indications of qualitative diversity—to matter under the influence of molecular forces of excessive complication, and laws very imperfectly understood, exhibiting fundamental diversities of quality, affording endless scope to agencies which scarcely appear to resolve themselves into the simple conception of mechanical effort, and whose active principles, electricity and heat, present themselves to us under aspects now reminding us of the ordinary forms of matter by their quantitative relations to tangible bodies, and now eluding our grasp by a subtilty which seems to transcend our notions of corporeal existence. Here, too, we become conversant with organic life in all its infinite diversities and stages of manifestation, and in all its adaptations to external conditions; as a something superposed upon and subsequent to matter. Here, too, we encounter voluntary motion as something again superposed upon mere organic development; and here, too, the life of

instinct and the life of thought, rising higher and higher by successive but gradual steps, till at length one vast bound lands us in HUMANITY, with all its hopes and visions of something yet beyond. Such is the field we have now to enter upon —

‘The wide, th’ unbounded prospect lies before us;’

but its richness, no less than its extent, forbids our lingering on its outskirts in idle contemplation of its glories.

The path followed by M. de Humboldt in threading the labyrinth of this vast mass of knowledge, is, perhaps, on the whole, the best which could have been adopted to preserve a continuity of course, and to bring the phenomena to bear on each other with due regard to causal sequence.

He first, under the general head of ‘Terrestrial Phenomena,’ gives us an outline of those broad features which have relation to the mass of the earth as a whole; and in which the acting forces and powers are considered in their mean or average intensity, or as acting on the largest scale, unaffected by local causes. The features which admit of being so presented, are those which refer to the dimensions and figure of the earth, its mean density and temperature; and the evidences, such as we possess them, of an increase in both these respects, in descending from its surface to its centre. Terrestrial magnetism too, and the disturbances, whatever be their origin, which the magnetic power of the earth undergoes upon the great scale, during ‘magnetic storms’ and auroral displays, as well as those secular variations which modify all its local manifestations, according to laws yet unknown, but whose influence extends to the whole globe, find a natural place in this division of the entire subject.

Under the general notion of the ‘reaction of the interior of the earth on its exterior,’ which affords, as it were, the canvas on which to depict the phenomena of earthquakes, volcanoes, hot springs, &c., we recognise the impress of that theory of geological dynamics which represents the external solid crust of the globe as in a continual though exceedingly slow process of contraction, by refrigeration, on its internal liquid contents, by which it becomes placed in a state of strain, which from time to time, and according to local circumstances affording facilities for disruption, relieves itself by fracture and by the ejection of a portion of the liquid matter. Such, at least, seems to be the conception implied in the word *reaction*, which presupposes *action*. The want of an original *primum mobile* competent to the production of the volcano and the earthquake as general, and not as local phenomena, is imperatively felt in geology.

As consequences of this reaction, appearing indifferently on

every part of the earth's surface, we have the ejection of *erupted* or '*endogenous*,' and the production of *metamorphic* rocks, together with upheavings and subsidences of portions of the earth's crust of greater or less extent, which, in the course of ages modify the distribution of sea and land over the surface of our planet. Simultaneous with these changes, but referring themselves to a totally different order of causes the seat of which is wholly exterior to our globe, and which depend entirely on the action of the sun and moon as the ultimate causes—the *prima mobilia*—of all those oceanic and atmospheric movements to which continents owe their destruction and reproduction, we have the continual formation of new strata at the bottom of the ocean; their gradual condensation by increase of pressure as more and more of their materials become accumulated; and their ultimate consolidation by the invasion of heat from beneath, in virtue of those general laws which regulate the movement of heat from point to point of bodies, the surface of which is maintained at a temperature, which, for this purpose, may be regarded as invariable. From the combination of the two orders of events arising from the continued action of these two classes of causes, each proceeding in perfect original independence of the other, but each in its progress continually modifying the conditions under which the other acts; and so producing a compound cycle, or rather interminable series, of excessive intricacy; depend all geological phenomena, properly so called. Meanwhile, on this interwoven tissue, as if not yet sufficiently complex, is superposed another cycle of causation in the electro-magnetic relations of the globe, which, though unimportant as respects the movement of masses, is no doubt powerfully so in the mineralogical arrangement of their particles, in the production of planes of false cleavage in the strata, and in the filling up, by metalliferous and other mineral veins, of the fissures which intersect them. To this class of mineralogical causes (on whose action the researches of Becquerel, Fox, and Hunt have thrown some light, but which stands in need of much more extensive and assiduous inquiry), we are somewhat surprised to find no allusion made in the work before us.

Among the materials of subverted and reconstructed continents, occur the buried remains of their former inhabitants. Palæontology, therefore, and the evidence it affords, in conjunction with other circumstances attending the materials and position of strata, leads us naturally to the consideration of the state of the surface of our globe in former epochs, in relation to its habitability by various orders of organic beings, and more especially to its distribution into sea and land.



‘We here indicate a connecting link between the history of the revolutions our globe has undergone, and the description of its present surface,—between geology and physical geography—which are thus combined in the general consideration of the form and extent of continents. The boundaries which separate the dry land from the liquid element, and the relative areas of each, have varied greatly during the long series of geological epochs: they have been very different, for example, when the strata of the coal formation were deposited horizontally upon the inclined strata of the mountain limestone and the old red sandstone; when the lias and the oolite were deposited on the keuper and the muschelkalk; and when the chalk was precipitated on the slopes of the green sand and the oolitic limestone. . . . . Maps have been drawn representing the state of the globe in respect of the distribution of land and water at these periods. They rest on a more sure basis than the maps of the wanderings of Io, or even than those of Ulysses, which at best represent but legendary tales, whilst the geological maps are the graphic representations of positive phenomena.’

We find ourselves thus introduced to the domain of physical geography, or the description of the actual state of the earth's surface in its three great divisions,—those of land, sea, and air,—as prepared for the habitation of organic beings, and as exhibiting the play of all those complex agencies on which depend the distribution of temperature and moisture, aerial and oceanic currents, and those conditions which, under the general title of climate, determine the abundance and limits of vegetable and animal forms. A general view of organic life and the distribution of plants and animals, infinitely less copious in detail than we should have expected from the exceeding richness of M. de Humboldt's information on this subject, and a short chapter on Man close the text; which is followed by a series of notes, indicating the authorities from which the statements throughout are derived, and full of a vast mass of other information, so interesting, so recondite, so various, as to leave us lost in admiration, both of the reading which could amass, and the discrimination which could select it.

The dimensions and figure of the earth constitute a branch of inquiry on which, perhaps, more pains, labour, and refinement have been lavished than on any other subject of human research. ‘The history of science,’ says M. de Humboldt, ‘presents no problem in which the object obtained, the knowledge of the mean compression of the earth, and the certainty that its figure is not a regular one, is so far surpassed in importance by the incidental gain which, in the course of its long and arduous pursuit, has accrued in the general cultivation and advancement of mathematical and astronomical knowledge.’ In fact, however, the benefit conferred has not been confined to these. The con-

tinual heaping on of refinement upon refinement, in respect both of instruments and methods, has been far from a mere barren and ostentatious accumulation. On the contrary, it has overflowed on all sides, and fertilised every other field of physical research, by the example it has set, and the necessity it has imposed of exactness of numerical determination, mathematical precision of statement, and rigorous account taken of every influential circumstance; as well as by the numerous physical elements whose exact measures and laws it has incidentally required to be known as data. By the improvement of our knowledge of these, the aspect of all science has been changed, and the apparently disproportionate application of talent and cost which have been brought to bear upon the subject, repaid with interest. The fixation of national standards of weight and measure, which has become indissolubly interwoven with it, has ever marked, and will ever continue to mark, the highest point to which human skill and refinement in the application of science to practical objects are capable of attaining.

In stating the result of these inquiries, M. de Humboldt follows the determination of Bessel in 1841. A better authority he could not have selected, and it is worth while to notice (since he has omitted to do so) the precise coincidence of this determination with that of Mr. Airy in 1831, from the assemblage of all the geodesical measurements *then* procured, — a coincidence amounting in fact to identity, the difference between the two statements of the earth's equatorial diameter being but 234 *feet*, between those of the polar only 296, and of the compression 38. Neither can we omit to mention here the only considerable accession to our knowledge on this head since the publication of 'The Kosmos,' viz. the rectification of Lacaille's erroneous arc at the Cape, by the admirable and indefatigable Maclear (performed at the hazard and almost at the sacrifice of his life), which has removed for ever one of the great stumbling-blocks in the way of general and exact conclusions on this subject.

The ellipticity of the earth, as Playfair has shown, can by no means be taken as affording even the slightest evidence of the entire primitive fluidity of its whole mass. Even when that of the internal strata is taken into the account, if there be any degree of mobility, from whatever cause arising short of entire and simultaneous fluidity, among its materials, this would ultimately conform its internal arrangement, as the sea does its external form, to the elliptic model. We do not mean to deny the strong presumption, however, that such fluidity does prevail at a certain depth: 'Tolerably accordant experience has shown ' that in Artesian wells the average increase of temperature in

'the strata passed through, is  $1^{\circ}$  of the Centigrade thermometer for 92 Parisian feet of vertical depth (54.5 English feet for  $1^{\circ}$  Fahr.). . . . If we suppose this increase to continue in an arithmetical ratio, a stratum of granite would be in a state of fusion at a depth of nearly 21 geographical miles.' The phenomena of hot springs in countries where volcanic eruptions have long since ceased; 'direct observation of the temperature of rocks in mines; and, above all, the volcanic activity of the earth, ejecting molten masses from opened clefts or fissures, bear unquestionable evidence of this increase for very considerable depths in the upper terrestrial strata.' Still we can determine nothing with certainty respecting the depth at which the materials of our rocks exist, 'either in a softened and still tenacious state, or in complete fusion; respecting cavities filled with elastic vapours; *the condition of fluids heated under enormous pressure*; or the law of the increase of density from the surface to the centre.' One thing only is certain, that the density *does* so increase, since the wonderfully agreeing conclusions arrived at by Cavendish, Reich, and Baily (for such they ought assuredly to be considered, the difference between Baily and Reich amounting to no more than one twenty-eighth part) abundantly demonstrate a mean density for the whole mass of five and a half, which is double that of basalt, and more than double that of granite; substances which undoubtedly emanate from very great depths beneath the surface.

The mean temperature of the globe is supposed to have attained so nearly an invariable state, that since the time of Hipparchus, and in an interval of 2000 years, it has not diminished by one three-hundredth of a degree of Fahrenheit's thermometer. This conclusion rests on the records of ancient eclipses, which having taken place in conformity with the theory of gravitation, implies the invariability of our unit of time or of the length of the day, during the interval. Hence Laplace has concluded, and the conclusion may be regarded as certain, that the length of the day, or the time of rotation of the earth on its axis, has not diminished by one hundredth part of a second. Hence also we are entitled to conclude that its mean radius has not diminished by a single yard in that interval. So far we are on sure ground: and if we consent to disregard as merely superficial, the transfer of matter from a higher to a lower level by oceanic and atmospheric abrasion, and the counteracting effect of volcanic ejections,—if, moreover, we set as in a balance one against the other, the upheavings of mountain chains, such as our own times have witnessed in the Andes, and the subsidences of extensive districts, such as are going on in Scandinavia, the

conclusion, as relates to temperature, must be admitted as valid, however it may be supposed to militate against the refrigeratory theory above alluded to.

The mean temperature at which the *surface* of the earth is maintained, if we consider the average of the whole globe, depends solely on external causes, the only one of which, worth considering as really influential, is the sun's radiation. Of the constancy or variability of this from year to year, or from century to century, we know nothing, though from the analogy of periodical or changeable stars we may surmise anything. But it by no means follows that this ignorance, on a point of such immense importance, is to continue. It is to the temperature of the ocean, continually and carefully observed in those parts of its surface where its changes are least (in the equatorial region, from 10° N. to 10° S.), that we must look, with the greatest probability of ultimate success, for the solution of this difficult but interesting problem. In these regions, the observations and researches of M. de Humboldt himself have established the fact of 'a wonderful uniformity and constancy of temperature 'over spaces of many thousand square miles.' It is here, therefore, that observations directed to this object can be made to the greatest advantage, and least exposed to the influence of casual and temporary disturbance. We know of no class of observations deserving more the attention of voyagers: and the more so, as the recent results of Mr. Caldecott respecting the temperature of the *soil* at considerable depths in India, have brought into evidence *enormous* differences, amounting to 6° between the *mean temperatures* of the earth and air at the same spot. Such might indeed have been expected on a careful consideration as to the different agencies of wind and rain on the one hand, and solar and nocturnal radiation on the other, in determining the respective averages, but they stand in striking contradiction to the generally received opinion of the necessary equality between the two means in question. It ought to be remarked, that M. de Humboldt, when stating this opinion, (p. 165. Tr.) and the practical application of it recommended by Boussingault, expresses himself with hesitation, if not with doubt on its subject.

The power of magnetism, and the polarity of the magnetic needle, appear to have been known to the Chinese from the most remote antiquity. Extracted from the annals of See-ma-thsian, a Chinese historian cotemporary with the destruction of the Bactrian empire by Mithridates I., we find the following extraordinary relation. "The emperor Tching-wang (1110 years before our 'era') presented to the ambassadors of Tong-king and Cochín

'China, who dreaded the loss of their way back to their own country, five magnetic cars, which pointed out the south by means of the moving arm of a little figure covered with a vest of feathers.' To each of these cars, too, a *hodometer*, marking the distances traversed by strokes on a bell, was attached, so as to establish a complete dead reckoning. (Humboldt, *Asie Centrale*, xli.; *Kösmos*, 171.) Such inventions, we cannot but observe, are not the creation of a few years, or a few generations. They presuppose long centuries of previous civilisation, and that too 'at an epoch cotemporary with Codrus and the return of the Heraclides to the Peloponnesus'—the obscure dawn of European history! Even the declination of the needle, or its deviation from the true meridian, was known to this extraordinary people at the epoch in question.

Two views of terrestrial magnetism may be taken. The one is that which makes the earth itself, or a large portion of the substance of it, intrinsically magnetic in that sense in which a loadstone is so. This view (which is at all events general, and but for the secular variations of the magnetic curves, would be even now perhaps the best which could be taken,) is vindicated by M. de Humboldt to our admirable countryman Gilbert, whose ideas were, in all physical matters, far in advance of his age (note 142.). It was the knowledge of these variations which led Halley to the formation of his wild as well as inadequate theory of an internal globe revolving within the external shell of the earth. If the mass of the globe be magnetic in the sense of the loadstone, it is scarcely conceivable that the local distribution of magnetic power on its surface should be otherwise than permanent. That it is not so—that the magnetic curves, one and all, are in a continual state of slow but regular change, *sweeping round upon the two hemispheres in contrary directions* (by which very act their forms are undergoing continual modification), we cannot help receiving as an indication that the seat of the earth's magnetism, if not entirely atmospheric, is at least so far superficial as to be subject to a large amount of external influence: seeing that they bear relation neither to any fixed lines in the globe itself on the one hand, nor to any determinate directions in external space on the other. The explanation of these secular variations is perhaps the obscurest problem which the '*Physique du Globe*' has yet offered for solution; and its solution, when known, cannot fail to carry with it the explanation of every other part of the phenomena.

Meanwhile it is certain that the phenomena of the magnetic needle, and its direction at each point of the surface, may, to a certain extent, be imitated on an artificial globe, by passing round

it at the surface a due system of electro-magnetic currents. This was actually done by the late Professor Barlow. To a slowly and *secularly variable* system of electric currents, therefore, whether atmospheric or terrestrial, all probability refers us as the cause of the earth's magnetism. And here we are brought to a stand, not only by the very imperfect state of our knowledge in respect of atmospheric electricity, of all the branches of meteorology the least advanced; but also by our ignorance of the actual forms of the magnetic curves over many and extensive regions of the earth, to say nothing of their secular changes. This blank area, however, is happily diminishing rapidly under the pressure of surveys set on foot in pursuance of that noble plan of co-operative magnetic research which, (thanks in the first instance to M. de Humboldt's powerful recommendation,) has been adopted and acted on by our own and other Governments upon a scale and with a sequence and energy to which no age has furnished a parallel. Within the interval, short of ten years, since the adoption of this system, the whole area of the Antarctic Ocean has been added to the domain of exact magnetic knowledge by the expedition under Sir James C. Ross, and by the subsequent survey of Lieutenants Moore and Clerk. British North America has become in like manner known ground by the survey of Lieutenant Lefroy, to which has been, or is in the course of being, added, that of the United States by Locke, Loomis, Bache, and other able and indefatigable observers. The expedition of Sir John Franklin, speedily, we trust, to return crowned with merited success, taken in conjunction with the survey of Hudson Bay, accomplished in the course of last summer by Lieutenant Moore, will complete our knowledge of the northern coast, and give to the continent of North America its due significance on the magnetic chart of the globe. Nor are these the whole, or any thing like the whole, of the acquisitions recently made and still making in this direction, which, however, our limits will not permit us further to dilate on, or to give their merited tribute of applause to the indefatigable exertions of the able editor of the work before us, in deducing from the vast mass of observations thus continually pouring in, the true forms of the magnetic curves, and in particular of the isodynamic lines and ovals which, although the last to be received into the list of magnetic elements, have proved the most interesting and important of any. The service thus rendered to magnetic science, it is in fact impossible to overappreciate.

Whatever idea we may form of the greater and more regular magnetic system of our globe, there can hardly remain a doubt

as to the reference of the diurnal and annual periodic fluctuations of the magnetic elements to electric currents in the earth or atmosphere caused by solar excitement. Nor can there be any hesitation in referring to sudden and violent disturbances of electrical equilibrium, from whatever cause arising, those mysterious phenomena to which M. de Humboldt (the first to observe, or at least strongly to draw attention to them,) has given the expressive name of magnetic storms, and in which the needle is agitated simultaneously over vast regions, whole continents, nay, even in some cases, *over the whole surface of the globe*. Of these the most remarkable on record is that of the 24th and 25th of September, 1841, which was observed at Toronto, in Canada, at Prague, at the Cape of Good Hope, at Van Diemen's Land, and at Macao. And here we cannot omit to notice the very remarkable coincidence of date between this and a great and extraordinary disturbance, which has quite recently been observed at Toronto, and of which the account by Lieutenant Lefroy is before us. The range of the needle, in respect of horizontal direction, on this occasion exceeded  $4^{\circ}$ , and the fluctuation in respect of horizontal intensity surpassed *a twentieth part of its total amount*. Now this disturbance (which was observed at Greenwich, though to not quite so great an extent) also took place on the 24th of September! A coincidence of this kind, should it be repeated, like that of the meteoric showers, would lead us irresistibly, and as an *instantia lucifera*, to look onwards, into the planetary spaces, for the cause of these singular phenomena.

Intimately connected with these irregular magnetic disturbances, and characterised by M. de Humboldt as the final discharge which restores the magneto-electric equilibrium, wrought to a climax of tension during their continuance, is the aurora or polar light. Of one variety of this superb phenomenon, that which consists in luminous beams and dancing streamers, terminating in a corona round the place of the elevated magnetic pole, he gives a most picturesque and beautiful description. The other, rarer, and less vivid in its phases, but perhaps in some respects even more interesting; that which consists in quiet luminous masses, either insulated or forming more or less regular arches transverse to the magnetic meridian, and *drifting constantly with a slow and steady movement* southward, he passes in silence. In both we recognise, by many indications, the presence of matter in the higher regions of the atmosphere, rendered luminous by the passage of electricity, but differing in the two cases in the mode of its arrangement, and perhaps, too, in elevation; the arrangement in the former being in lines

parallel to the dipping needle; in the other sometimes in amorphous masses, at others with a strong tendency to a transverse position. Is it possible that the distinction between the magnetic and diamagnetic forms of matter, brought to light by Faraday's late rescarches, may play a part in these arrangements?

The height of the auroral phenomena has been a subject of very varying estimation, and if we allow that, as M. de Humboldt expresses it, 'every observer sees his own aurora as certainly as he sees his own rainbow,' it must be evident that no parallactic mode of determining its height is practicable. This, however, applies only to the first of the above-mentioned species of aurora, where, from the number and rapid coruscations of the streamers, no one can be individualized and definitely fixed. The luminous masses and transverse arcs of the other variety have assuredly an optical *reality* — are *objects*, and capable of being seen in their true geometrical places by any number of spectators at once. It is impossible, in short, that a body of light, steady enough to be definitely referred by one observer to one given direction in space, and by another to another at the same instant, should not have an objective locality. The arcs of October 17. 1819, and March 29. 1826, whose heights, as calculated by Dalton from very positive data, appear to have been nearly equal (100—110 miles), were certainly in this predicament; nor do we consider his conclusions as at all shaken by the objections advanced against them by Dr. Farquharson. On the other hand, M. de Humboldt appears disposed to doubt the reality of auroral *streamers* having been seen below the clouds; but on this head the observations of the last-named excellent observer on the aurora of February 24. 1842, are so positive and circumstantial, as to leave no room for doubt. The crackling or hissing sound, reported to accompany their displays in high latitudes, he considers as altogether apocryphal. It is not among the least puzzling features of auroral phenomena, that although so intensely *magneto-electric as actually to interfere with the free transmission of messages along the electric telegraph*, experiments made during their continuance with very sensitive electrometers have hitherto given only negative results, since, during the finest auroras, no change in the electric tension of the atmosphere has been detected. (*Kosmos*, 186., Tr.)

On the subject of earthquakes and volcanoes, those great manifestations of internal telluric activity, there is probably no geologist now living who can speak so largely from personal knowledge as M. de Humboldt—who has had such opportunities of studying their phenomena in that region of the globe where they are habitually developed on the grandest and most



terrific scale, as an eye-witness, or by diligent and immediate inquiry on spots the recent scenes of some of the greatest catastrophes on record. The tremendous convulsions which, in 1797, destroyed Riobamba, with the loss of between 30 and 40,000 lives in a few minutes, with 'a sudden and mine-like explosion, a vertical action from below upwards,' which hurled the corpses of many of the unfortunate sufferers several hundred feet in height on a neighbouring mountain, and across a river, took place only three years before his arrival in Quito, the city lying still in ruins, and every particular, of course, vividly fresh in the recollection of the survivors. The catastrophe which destroyed Cumana took place in the same year. The personal narrative of his travels has made us familiar with the volcanoes of Quito, Mexico, and Chili, and given to the names of Cotopaxi, Pichincha, Tunguragua, and Jorullo, a terrible, yet fascinating, celebrity. With his extraordinary account of the last-named volcano, with its Malpais and Hornitos, there are probably few of our readers unacquainted.

We shall not enter here into any of the speculations current among geologists which have for their object to render an account of the ultimate origin of earthquakes, and the immediate seat of their first impulse. It is to their propagation along the superficial strata, and especially with the mode in which that propagation is dynamically effected, that inquiry can be most usefully, because most effectively, directed. Every one, indeed, is agreed that it is in some sense undulatory; but probably no two geologists have hitherto exactly agreed as to the sense in which that term is to be taken: whether, for instance, the undulation be analogous to that of a fluid surface, or of a stretched sheet, or, lastly, to that by which waves are propagated through elastic media in the conveyance of sound and light, viz., not by lateral tension or by gravity, but by the direct elastic action of the particles on each other. It is here that experience furnishes us with an unequivocal indication in the recorded velocity of their propagation, estimated by M. de Humboldt at twenty-eight geographical miles per minute, which, however, is probably underrated, and which, at any rate, exceeds double that of sound; a velocity, as Mr. Mallet has justly remarked in a paper read before the Royal Irish Academy in 1846, incompatible with any imaginable mode of propagation but that last alluded to. This is, accordingly, the view of the subject which Mr. Mallet adopts, and which, on the whole, appears to render a clear and intelligible account of many of the apparently bizarre and capricious phenomena with which the records of these events abound; such, for example, as the reversal of the

stones of a pavement, and the twisted obelisks of Stefano del Bosco by the Calabrian earthquake; the confusion of fields and boundaries; and the strangely irregular intermixture of lines of violent action with others of comparative repose, resulting from nodal intersections and interferences of shocks arriving at the same point from different origins or by routes of different lengths. Such interferences, we must observe, are expressly indicated by M. Humboldt (p. 192.) as resulting from intersecting earthquake waves, 'as in intersecting waves of sound;' adding, moreover, —

'The magnitude of the waves propagated in the crust of the earth will be increased at the surface, according to the general law of mechanics by which vibrations transmitted in elastic bodies have a tendency to detach the superficial strata.'

What may be the mechanical law here alluded to we know not. Probably the scaling off of brittle coatings from hard bodies by a blow. But we cannot help supposing the true mode of earthquake propagation (by waves of elastic compression) to have been apprehended with very considerable distinctness in penning this passage, though not seized and worked out, as it might have been, into a regular theory. We will only notice, in farther illustration of the explanatory power of this mode of conceiving the matter, the facility with which the singular effect of vorticose motion is accounted for by the crossing of two waves of horizontal vibration, which, as in the theory of the circular polarization of light, compound, at their point of intersection, a rotary movement.

That a theory so simple, and, we may add, so obvious, has not been earlier propounded and received, can only be accounted for by the vast scale of the phenomena and the amplitude of the earthquake wave, which causes the wave itself, as 'an advancing form,' to escape notice, and the molecular motions only by which it is propagated to be perceived. For in this theory we are to bear in mind that man and his works are but, in respect of these gigantic movements, what the sand spread by Chladni on one of his vibrating plates is to the sonorous vibration it furnishes the means of examining.

What the auroral discharge is to the 'magnetic storm,' in M. de Humboldt's view of that phenomenon, and, as appears to us, with far more correctness, the volcano in eruption is to the earthquake — the relief of tension and the restoration of equilibrium. Innumerable instances of this connexion might be adduced, but the subject is rather trite, and our limits begin to warn us that we have yet a wide extent of ground to travel over, and we must therefore pass over, not without regret, the

evidences of diminishing volcanic action afforded by the phenomena of Solfaterras and hot springs, as well as those of interior heat generally, as manifested in the continued ejection of carburetted hydrogen, of which Sec-tchuan, in China, and Fredonia, in New York, offer the most striking examples; as well as those of carbonic acid which, in many parts of Germany and on the Rhine, 'indicate the last remains of volcanic activity in and 'near its ancient foci in an earlier state of the globe.'

In the 'Geological Description of the Earth's Crust,' two distinct classifications or arrangements are followed, which, perhaps, we can hardly better characterise in contrast with each other than as *genetic* and *historical*. The former is in consonance with that view of superposed causalities which we have taken of geological phenomena in general. It refers itself to the presumed origin, and not to the historical order of the matters classified. This would naturally divide the rocks of which the earth's crust is composed into two orders: *endogenous*, having their origin from the internal activity of the earth; and *exogenous*, arising from the degradation of continents by external force, and their reconstruction in new localities by aqueous deposition. But these causes being in perpetual and simultaneous action, it becomes necessary to admit two other members into this general classification, in whose formation as they exist at present both orders of genetic cause have had a share; those namely, first, in which deposited rocks have been altered in texture, density, and mineralogical characters by subterraneous heat either slowly invading them by conduction from below, or suddenly applied by eruptive energy forcing melted matter into contact with them, and introducing new materials into their composition by sublimation, (as in the view taken by Von Buch of the Dolomitic limestone of the Tyrol). The second member of the series resulting from this complex action comprises rocks constructed by recementation of fragments and pulverised matter, whether produced by the violence of eruptive agency, or by the slower process of water washing and the action of torrents or debacles. Thus we have at length a fourfold division of the materials of the earth's exterior, into erupted, sedimentary, metamorphic, and conglomerate rocks.

In subdividing the erupted rocks little importance would attach to oryctognostic character, except in so far as it can be connected with indications of the depth from which they may have been erupted, the scale upon which their expulsion from the bosom of the earth may have been effected, and the state of fluidity at which they may have arrived at the surface. These give rise to a system of characters partly mineralogical and

partly geological, in which granite and syenite stand at the lower end of the scale, and basalt and superficial lavas at the upper, while porphyrics, greenstones, serpentine, hypersthene rock, and trachyte, fill up the intermediate stages. Some particulars, given by M. de Humboldt, respecting the superposition of granite, will be found interesting, when we recollect at how comparatively late a period the idea of overlying granite was considered almost to amount to a contradiction in terms:—

‘In the valley of the Irtysh, between Buchtarminsk and Ustka-menogorsk, granite covers transition slate for a space of four miles, and penetrates it *from above downwards* in narrow branching veins, having wedge-shaped terminations. . . . As granite covers argillaceous schists in Siberia and in the Departement de Finisterre (Ile de Miheu), so does it cover oolitic limestone in the mountains of Oisons (Fermons), and syenite and chalk in Saxony near Weinböhla.’

To these instances we may add the valley of Lavis, in the Tyrol, near Predazzo, where it overlies dolomite. The true reason for the rarity of these granite superpositions is doubtless to be sought in the very slight degree of fluidity of the upper portions of the upheaved masses, and their vast thickness, which permits but rare opportunities for escape of the more liquid matter from below. A beautiful granite dyke is seen intersecting granite perfectly similar, and no doubt nearly contemporaneous, on the summit of the Paarl Rock near Stellenbosch, in South Africa, as if the fissured rock had been re-cemented in the very act of rising by an upward injection, which in cooling has arranged itself in parallel layers, nearly at right-angles to the general direction of the vein.

Sedimentary rocks are necessarily classified according to their geological order of superposition, and are made to consist of—1. Argillaceous schists of the transition series, including the Silurian and Devonian formations; 2. Carboniferous deposits; 3. Limestones; 4. Travertin; 5. Infusorial masses. From this series M. de Humboldt excludes all purely mechanical deposits of sand and detritus, regarding them as in strictness belonging to the conglomerate division. The abundance of limestones in the latter portions of this series he considers as a result of the decreasing heat of the superficial waters allowing of their absorbing carbonic acid from an atmosphere overcharged with that element.\*

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\* The exceeding readiness with which newly precipitated carbonate of lime subsides in warm water, compared with what takes place in cold, especially when certain saline substances are present, is a chemical fact which may have some bearing on this point.

The process of metamorphism (a term first introduced into geology, we believe, by Lyell) is very obscure. That electrical action is often concerned in it, we can hardly doubt. The portion of M. de Humboldt's work which treats of it is full of interest, but we cannot afford room for remark or extract, further than to notice the singular difficulties which beset any geological account of the vast beds of pure quartz, from *seven to eight thousand feet in thickness*, characteristic of the Andes of South America. In the older Plutonic theories, indeed, these would be easily dealt with. Modern speculation, however, is scarcely hardy enough to draw so largely on internal heat as would be necessary to fuse and erupt such masses of so intractable a substance. Their consolidation from sandy deposits by partial fusion under the transforming influence of adjacent rocks (as Murchison proposes to account for the phenomena of the Caradoc sandstones) is subject to hardly less difficulties. The chemistry of long-continued heat under pressure, the production of artificial simple minerals, and the imitation of metamorphic changes on rocky substances, by contact with heated matter, open a field of inquiry deserving of more cultivation than it has hitherto obtained.

The same reason which renders it necessary to limit our remarks on this portion of the subject of geology, compels us to pass over entirely the view which M. de Humboldt takes of the historical department of that science, and the order of succession of the forms of animal and vegetable life which modern geological research has revealed to us as the denizens of our planet in the previous stages of its existence. We should do so with extreme regret, (since the sketch which is given, though in the utmost degree condensed, is arranged in a very luminous and masterly manner,) were it not that, although ranking high as a geologist, his own personal contributions to that science belong rather to the lithological than to its palæontological department; and were it not too that an extensive knowledge of the main features of these grand disclosures is very generally diffused in this country. We shall prefer, therefore, to devote what room remains to us to those subsequent portions of his work, where the light which he directs upon them is mingled with many and bright rays emanating immediately from himself.

Among the leading features of that part of the general contemplation of nature which relates to the PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY of our globe in its actual state, we must regard, first, the quantity of land raised above the water; next, the configuration of each great continental mass in horizontal extension and vertical elevation. That all, or nearly all, the existing land has been so

raised, M. de Humboldt regards as an established truth, and considers a considerable part of the height of all the present continents to be due to 'the eruption of the quartzose porphyry, which overthrew with violence the first great terrestrial Flora, the material of our coal beds.' Previous to this, the portion supporting land vegetation was exclusively insular; nor was it until the epoch of the older tertiary formations that the great continents approached to their present form and extent.

The ratio of sea to dry land is stated at 270 or 280 to 100, or in round numbers as about 3 to 1, the islands amounting to one twenty-third of the continental masses. As regards the general distribution of sea and land, M. de Humboldt confines himself to observing that the northern hemisphere contains nearly three times as much land as the southern, and the eastern (from the meridian of Teneriffe) far more than the western. This mode of statement, however, conveys a much less lively and distinct impression of the law of distribution than the division (suggested by Colson, *Phil. Trans.* vol. xxxix. p. 210.) of the globe into two hemispheres, a terrene and an aqueous one, the former having Great Britain, the latter her antipodes, for its vertex.\* In fact, if we endeavour to include the maximum of land in one hemisphere, and that of water in the other, according to our present knowledge of the globe, we shall find as the centre of the terrene hemisphere a point in the south of England somewhat eastward of Falmouth. With exception of the tapering termination of South America, the land in the other is wholly insular, and were it not for New Holland, its amount would be quite insignificant. As protuberance above the sea level indicates comparative levity, are we not thence entitled to conclude the non-coincidence of the centre of gravity of our globe with its centre of figure, the denser portion being situated beneath the South Pacific?

On the general form of the land we find some striking remarks. The southern terminations of the great continental masses affect the pyramidal form, which is repeated on a smaller scale in the peninsulas of India and Arabia, &c., while generally, prolonged appendages, both to the northward and southward, affect a meridional direction. Eastern and western coasts, we may add, are for the most part rounded, though the eastern occasionally present instances of angular forms (as Brazil, and Labrador in America, Azania (Adel) in Africa, Oman in southern and

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\* See a chart of the two hemispheres on the horizon of London. Hughes. London, 1839.

Tschutschki in northern Asia. The major axis of the Asiatic continent (to which Europe is a peninsula) is at right angles to that of the American; though perhaps South America is rather to be considered as analogous to Africa, not only from its remarkable similarity of general form, but also from the singular thread-like adhesion of each to its neighbouring northern mass. Were these threads broken, every commercial relation, and almost every climate of the civilised world, would undergo the most remarkable changes.

‘The general direction of the land of Europe is from south-west to north-east, and is at right-angles to the direction of the great fissures, which is from north-west to south-east, extending from the mouths of the Rhine and the Elbe, through the Adriatic and Red Sea, and the mountain system of Puschti-koh in Luristan, and terminating in the Indian Ocean. This rectangular intersection of the Continent in the direction of its principal extent, has powerfully influenced the commercial relations of Europe with Asia and the north of Africa, as well as the progress of civilisation on the formerly more flourishing shores of the Mediterranean.’

M. de Humboldt has been at great pains to arrive at a knowledge of the mean elevations of the chief continental masses, above the sea-level, which (in English feet) he states as follows: For Europe 671 feet, North America 748, Asia 1132, South America 1151. For Africa we have no sufficient data. ‘Laplace’s estimation of 3078 feet (French) as the mean height of continents, is at least three times too great. The illustrious geometer was conducted to this erroneous result by hypothesis as to the mean depth of the sea’ (note 360). The chain of the Pyrenees, if equably spread over France, would raise its surface according to his estimate 115, and the Alps over Europe 21·3 English feet. The former of these estimates certainly gives us a greater idea of the magnitude of the natural barrier between France and Spain, than any ordinary exaggeration of language or poetical description would do. M. de Humboldt closes this part of his subject with the following comfortable reflection: —

‘Since Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa, Sorata, Illimani, and Chimborazo, the colossal summits of the Alps and the Andes, are considered to be among the most recent elevations, we are by no means at liberty to assume that the upheaving forces have been subject to progressive diminution. On the contrary, all geological phenomena indicate alternate periods of activity and repose. The quiet which we now enjoy is only apparent; the tremblings which still shake the surface, in every latitude and in every species of rock, — the progressive elevation of Sweden, and the appearance of new islands of eruption, — are

far from giving us reason to suppose that our planet has reached a period of final repose.'

The phenomena of the ocean may be considered with reference to its depth, temperature, density, and to its motions as agitated by waves, tides, and currents. With respect to its depth, except near shores and in frequented tracks, we know almost nothing. Theoretical considerations indicate a *mean* depth of 'a small fraction of the ellipticity of the earth,' which can hardly be interpreted at more than four or five miles. Ross sounded (in  $15^{\circ} 3'$  south,  $23^{\circ} 14'$  west) without finding bottom at 27,600 feet (about five miles and a quarter), which is the greatest depth yet attained.

As regards the temperature of the ocean, the observations of Kotzebue in his voyage round the world appear first to have indicated, those of Beechey in his voyage to the Pacific to have (so far as they go) supported, and those of Sir James C. Ross in his recent Antarctic voyage to have established almost beyond a doubt, the extraordinary fact that the deep sea water, below a certain level determined by the latitude, is of one invariable temperature throughout the globe, *and that temperature a very low one*, the calculations of Lenz, founded on Kotzebue's results, giving  $36^{\circ}$  Fahr., and those of Ross  $39^{\circ} \cdot 5$ . The depth at which this temperature is attained, according to the latter authority, is 7200 feet at the equator, diminishing to  $56^{\circ} 26'$  south latitude where it attains the surface, and the sea is of equable temperature at all depths. Thence again the upper surface of this uniform substratum descends as the latitude increases, and at  $70^{\circ}$  has already attained a depth of 4500 feet. Similar phenomena would appear to occur in proceeding from the equator northward, the circle of constant temperature being repeated nearly in the same latitude. Thus the ocean is divided into three great regions, two polar basins in which the surface temperature is below, and one medial zone in which it is above  $39^{\circ} \cdot 5$ , being  $80^{\circ}$  at the equator, and at the poles of course the freezing point of sea water. It will be very readily understood that in this statement there is nothing repugnant to hydrostatical laws, the compressibility of water insuring an increase of density in descending within much wider limits of temperature than here contemplated.

The physical consequences of this great law, should it be found completely verified by further research, are in the last degree important. One of them, noticed by Ross, is, 'that the internal heat of the earth exercises no influence upon the mean temperature of the ocean,' a conclusion not very easy to reconcile with the theory of central heat itself, or, at least with its regular



distribution. Another is the complete destruction of the notion of submarine currents setting from the poles towards the equator, caused by the subsidence of cold water in high latitudes. On the contrary, the actual disposition of things would necessitate a constant *superficial* flow of cold water from the poles towards the equator, and of warm from the equator towards the poles, in abatement of the polar and equatorial excesses of level; a mingling of these overflows on, or about the parallels of latitude where the mean temperature is found; and their descent there in maintenance of a continual, but merely superficial triple system of circulation. If any deep-sea currents could arise at all from such a state of temperature, it must be in consequence of the descent of water rendered saltier by evaporation at the tropics, unless indeed (as is conceivable) the circulation of salt as well as of heat should be also confined to the superficial strata. Enough, however, of these considerations, which are leading us astray from our guide.

M. de Humboldt passes very cursorily over the vast and complex subject of the tides, into the somewhat flagging interest of which a fresh vitality has been of late years infused by the striking researches of Whewell into the laws of propagation of the tide wave, which he has taken up as a matter of inductive inquiry; thereby exchanging the slow and arduous struggle of the geometer with almost insuperable obstacles, for the animating pursuit of practical laws. The elaborate inquiries of Airy also into the combined theory and practice of tide observation, have added to this reviving interest, and their joint labours have made this part of the Newtonian doctrine once more an English subject, which it had long well nigh ceased to be. On the other hand, the great ocean currents resulting from the general set of the trade winds and the friction of the tide wave on the bed of the ocean (adopting Weber's view of undulatory motion), are described with much spirit. The great current of the gulf stream, to which we are indebted for the genial warmth of our south-western coast, is one result of this movement, and is too well known by the descriptions of all voyagers, and the elaborate researches of Rennell, to require notice here. Not so the counterpart of this current in the South Pacific, first brought into notice by M. de Humboldt in 1802. This current drifts the cold water of the South Seas along the western coast of South America, as far as the extreme north-westerly projection of that coast, where it is suddenly deflected outwards in a due west direction into the open ocean, and there ultimately lost. At this point its waters are nearly 24° Fahr. colder than those of the general surrounding ocean, and so sharply marked is its

course, that a ship sailing northwards passes quite suddenly from cold into hot water.

As the scene of a wonderfully diversified and exuberant life, both vegetable and animal, but especially the latter, the ocean also claims our attention. To say nothing of those colossal forms which, divested by the buoyancy of the medium in which they subsist, of the incumbrance of *weight*, are left free to exert the whole of their giant power to overcome its resistance, we find in the minuter forms of animal existence an unbounded field of admiring contemplation.

'The application of the microscope increases still farther our impression of the profusion of organic life which pervades the recesses of the ocean, since throughout its mass we find animal existence, and at depths exceeding the height of our loftiest mountains the strata of water are alive with polygastric worms, cycloidæ and ophrydinæ. Here swarm countless hosts of minute luminiferous animals, mammalia, crustacea, peridinea, and ciliated nereides, which, when attracted to the surface by peculiar conditions of weather, convert every wave into a crest of light. The abundance of these minute creatures, and of the animal matter supplied by their rapid decomposition is such that the sea-water itself becomes a nutritious fluid to many of the larger inhabitants of the ocean. If all this richness and variety of life, —

M de Humboldt goes on to add, in that vein of thoughtful pocsy in which he indulges in several parts of this work, and to which, in truth, it owes much of its charm,

'—containing some highly organised and beautiful forms, is well fitted to afford, not only an interesting study, but also a pleasing excitement to the fancy; the imagination is yet more deeply, I might say, more solemnly, moved by the impression of the boundless and immeasurable which every sea voyage affords. He who, awakened to the inward exercise of thought, delights to build up an inner world in his own spirit, fills the wide horizon of the open sea with the sublime idea of the infinite; his eye dwells especially on the distant line where air and water join, and where stars arise and set in ever renewed alternation. In such contemplations there mingles, as in all human joy, a breath of sadness and longing.'

As the sea, no doubt, holds in solution some small proportion of every soluble body in nature, so, besides the two great chemical elements of which dry air consists, and its variable constituent of aqueous vapour, there is probably no vaporisable body of which the atmosphere does not contain some trace. And from what we know of the influential part played in the economy of nature by one or two of these subordinate constituents, we can hardly doubt that others, whose presence has not hitherto been actually detected by analysis, have functions of high im-

portance assigned to them in that economy. On the carbonic acid which constitutes less than the two thousandth part of the atmosphere, all vegetation depends for its supply of carbon; and Liebig has shown that to the presence of ammonia, in far less proportion, the rain water owes its fertilising power. To the occasional production of ozone, the most powerfully bleaching and oxidating substance in nature, by electric discharges, though in proportion inconceivably minute, we probably owe the disinfection of the air from a variety of noxious miasmata, thus verifying by one of the most delicate results of scientific inquiry, the vulgar notion of the purifying agency of thunder storms.

Meteorology, however, has no concern with these minute chemical admixtures—the only distinction it recognises is that of air and vapour, and this only because these form, in fact, two distinct, and to a great extent independent atmospheres, subject each to its own peculiar laws (and those laws widely different), and each reacting on the other solely by mechanical impulse and resistance. In the movements and affections of these two atmospheres by the sun's heat, the one permanent in material and constant in quantity, the other in a continual state of renovation and destruction; we recognise, as in geology, the simultaneous agency of two distinct systems of causation, superposed and modifying each other's effects—but with this advantage on the side of meteorology, that their agency is limited to definite annual and diurnal cycles, corresponding to those of the supply of solar heat, rendering their study, so far, easier. Here also we have to deal with electricity as a third element, but we strongly incline to the opinion, that its agency as a meteorological *cause*, is exceedingly limited, indeed that it may be altogether left out of the account as productive of any meteorological effect of importance on the great scale.

It is by no means, however, in its general connexion as a science, that M. de Humboldt considers this vast and complex subject. The view which he takes of it regards only its final and practical bearings on climate as a part of physical geography, and that under very general heads, viz. the variation of atmospheric pressure, the climate distribution of heat, the humidity of the atmosphere, and its electric tension. Each of these heads will afford us room for a few remarks.

All those meteorological phenomena whose period is diurnal may be studied, as he very justly observes, in their greatest simplicity, and therefore to the greatest advantage, between the tropics and especially under the equator. For this there are two reasons; first, that the sun's meridian altitude varies but little throughout the year; and secondly, that the equatorial zone is

symmetrically related to the two hemispheres. In particular the diurnal fluctuation of barometric pressure pursues a march so regular that we may infer the hour of the day from the height of the mercurial column, without an error, on the average, exceeding fifteen or seventeen minutes. 'In the torrid zone of the new continent,' he says, 'I have found the regularity of this ebb and flow of the aerial ocean undisturbed either by storm, tempest, rain, or earthquake, both on the coasts and at elevations of nearly 13,000 feet above the sea.' The total diurnal oscillation amounts, under the equator, to 0.117 in., diminishing gradually as the latitude increases. This fluctuation has usually been compared to the tides of the ocean, but has, in fact, no theoretical connexion with it. It is a compound phenomenon arising from the superposition of two perfectly distinct diurnal oscillations, each going through its complete period in twenty-four hours; the one taking place in the aerial atmosphere, and arising from its alternate heating and cooling, which produce a flux and reflux over the point of observation; the other arising in the aqueous atmosphere by the alternate production and destruction of vapour by the heat of day and cold of night. The resolution of the hitherto puzzling part of this phenomenon, viz. its double diurnal wave into two single ones, following different laws, and non-coincident in their phases, does honour to the sagacity of Dove, followed up as it has since been by the laborious researches of Colonel Sabine, to whose discussion of this point (note 382.) we particularly direct our readers' attention.

The gradual depression of the barometer in proceeding from tropical latitudes either way to the equator, was first noticed by M. de Humboldt himself. Its explanation is easy, viz. the continual efflux of heated air upwards from the equator towards the poles. Hence, by the effect of the earth's rotation on the currents setting in below to supply the void, arise the trade winds, and in the amount of this depression, which does not exceed two tenths of an inch, we have a measure of the motive power which originates these great currents. The connexion of the trades with the monsoons, and the varying winds of higher latitudes, is beautifully placed in evidence by the law of rotation of the wind lately discovered by Dove, a conclusion following so simply and naturally from the very same principle on which Hally originally explained the constant easterly direction of the trades (the difference of rotatory velocity on different terrestrial parallels), that it is only astonishing it should so long have escaped notice. As regards the local distribution of barometric pressure, the most extraordinary fact which has yet appeared in

meteorology is, perhaps, the general depression of the mercury to the enormous amount of an entire inch over the whole Antarctic Ocean, established by the late observations of Ross.

The chief elements of climate are heat and moisture; but it is neither on the extremes of heat or cold, moisture or dryness, experienced on rare occasions, that the character of a climate depends. Climatology is throughout a matter of averages, and is best studied and best understood by the graphical depiction of such averages, obtained by many years of careful observation according to a method proposed and carried out by M. de Humboldt himself, in 1807. In this system, all those points on the earth's surface which have equal mean annual temperatures are connected by a system of curves called *Isothermal*; those, again, in which the mean temperatures of the hottest summer months are alike, by another system of *Isothēral* curves; and those in which the mean winter temperatures agree, by a third, or *Isocheimōnal* system.

The law of distribution of heat over the surface of the globe, is best apprehended by the study of the first of these systems of curves, respecting which researches subsequent to those of M. de Humboldt have led to general and very remarkable conclusions. In the northern hemisphere only, are the forms of the Isothermal curves known with any degree of exactness. In this Sir D. Brewster places two points, or *poles of maximum cold*, on the 80th parallel of latitude, and in nearly opposite longitudes, (95° W. and 100° E.), of which the mean temperature is 3½° Fahr., and about which as foci the Isothermal lines form a system of spherical lemniscates, imitating in general form those beautiful curves exhibited by polarised light in biaxial crystals. The meridians of these poles pass almost diametrically through the main bodies of the American and Asiatic continents, while two other meridians nearly at right angles to them traverse the Polar sea, running out along the north Atlantic down the west coasts of Europe on the one hand, and nearly through Behring's Straits into the Pacific on the other. • These then are the meridians respectively of greatest cold and warmth, and it is impossible not to recognise in them the effect of extensive tracts of land in high latitudes in increasing, and of sea in diminishing the intensity of cold as we approach the pole. Kämtz's projections confirm this result, so far as the general form of the isothermic ovals is concerned, but place their foci in rather lower latitudes, the one near Chatankoi in the Samoiede country, the other nearly upon Barrow's Strait. The succession of these lines followed along their intersections with the east coast of America, as compared with the west coast of that continent and

of Europe, places the mean climate of the whole of the former coast in striking and disadvantageous contrast with that of both the latter, and abundantly explains the early prevalent, though mistaken impression, of a general deficiency of genial warmth in the New World as compared with the Old.

The influence of great tracts of land remote from sea coasts, owing, doubtless, to the greater clearness of sky arising from the defect of moisture, tends to exaggerate both the summer heat and the winter cold, but the latter in a higher degree than the former. Accordingly we find the Isothēral curves in the interior of the great continents of the northern hemisphere affecting a greater convexity towards the north, and the Isocheimōnal less so as compared with the lines of mean temperature. The effect of this is to produce in those regions *extreme* or excessive climates in which violent summer heat is succeeded by intense winter cold. Of such, M. de Humboldt gives instances in Tobolsk, Barnaoul, and Irkutsk, in whose summers, for weeks together, the thermometer remains at  $86^{\circ}$  or  $87^{\circ}$  Fahr. while their winters exhibit the severe *mean* temperature of  $-0^{\circ}\cdot4$  to  $+4^{\circ}\cdot0$  of the same scale, or  $40^{\circ}$  lower than the mean winter temperature of London.

On the other hand, the proximity of the sea for many and obvious reasons tends to mitigate and equalise the fluctuations of temperature, and where this tendency, as on the west coast of Ireland and the south-west coast of England, conspires with a generally favourable position as regards the Isothermic curves, an approach to perpetual spring prevails. 'In the north-western part of Ireland, in lat.  $54^{\circ}46'$ , under the same parallel with Kongsberg,' (where even our holly cannot survive,) 'the myrtle flourishes as luxuriantly as in Portugal.' The winter mean temperature of Dublin is actually  $3^{\circ}\cdot6$  higher than that of Milan.

The effect of such local peculiarities is, of course, strongly marked in vegetation, which M. de Humboldt exemplifies in the growth of the grape, and the production of *drinkable* wine. This condition, he observes, necessitates a mean summer temperature of at least  $64^{\circ}\cdot4$  Fahr., a mean annual temperature not below  $49^{\circ}\cdot2$ , and a mean winter one above  $32^{\circ}\cdot8$ . These conditions are all amply satisfied and exceeded along our southern coasts; so that it is clear that not merely drinkable, but respectable, wine might be grown there: and if, at very early periods of our history, we find that such was the practice, we may observe that, owing to the diminution of the obliquity of the ecliptic, we are placed, so far as summer temperature is concerned, in a *somewhat* less favourable situation than at the epoch of the Roman occupation. The difference amounts to

13', by which the summer sun comes less northward than at the epoch alluded to.

'I have, in no part of the earth, not even in the Canary Islands, in Spain, or in the south of France, seen more magnificent fruit, especially grapes, than at Astrachan. With a mean annual temperature of 48°, the mean summer temperature rises to 70°.2, which is that of Bordeaux; while not only there, but still more to the south, at Kiaslar (in the latitude of Avignon and Rimini), the thermometer sometimes falls, in winter, to -13° or -22° Fahr.

Ascent into a higher region of the atmosphere has the same depressing effect on temperature with increase of latitude. The fact is universally known—the cause, perhaps, less familiarly so. Were there no atmosphere, a thermometer freely exposed (at sunset) to the heating influence of the earth's radiation, and the cooling power of its own into space, would indicate (if the dip of the horizon be neglected) a medium temperature between that of the celestial spaces (-132°) and that of the earth's surface below it (82° at the equator, -3½° in the Polar Sea). Under the equator, then, it would stand, on the average, at -25°, and in the Polar Sea at -68°. The presence of the atmosphere tends to prevent the thermometer so exposed from attaining these extreme low temperatures; first, by imparting heat by conduction; secondly, by impeding radiation outwards. Both these causes are more effective in proportion to the density of the air in contact with the thermometer, which is, therefore, always maintained at a degree higher than those named, and approaching more nearly to the temperature of the soil, the lower the level of the station.

The habitual dryness of the upper regions of the atmosphere is another general fact, the causes of which are not usually neatly conceived. It is partly apparent, partly real. In proportion to the rarity of the air about any moist surface, evaporation is freer, the drying process goes on more rapidly, and superfluous moisture is more speedily exhaled. Mere facility of exhalation, however, is not to be construed as any proof of extreme deficiency of moisture in the air. On the other hand, however, such deficiency really and necessarily exists. If there were never any rain, snow, or dew, the aqueous atmosphere would be coextensive with the aerial one, and each stratum of the latter in a state of exact saturation. Every act of precipitation (no matter how produced) unsettles this state of things, and withdraws from the total mass of the air some portion of its entire amount of vapour. As such precipitations, therefore, are constantly going on in some place or other, the atmosphere, as a mass, though incumbent on a wet and evaporating surface, is

necessarily always deficient in moisture. And for the very same reason, every superior stratum is relatively deficient in comparison with that immediately beneath it, from which its supply is derived. In point of ultimate causation, there is a constant drain upon the aqueous contents of the atmosphere, arising from changes of temperature. This drain extends to all its strata; but while the lower renew their losses from a surface hygrometrically *wet*, the upper draw their supply intermediately from sources more and more deficient in moisture.

In intimate connexion with these general relations stands the striking and picturesque phenomenon of perpetual snow on mountain summits, and the causes which determine the altitude of its inferior limit in different regions. The snow-line necessarily descends to the level of the sea, in latitudes where the mean temperature is beneath the freezing point, and rises, generally speaking, as we approach the equator, where, in South America, or Cotopaxi and Chimborazo, it attains a level not inferior to that of the *summit* of Mont Blanc. On the southern declivity of the Himalayas, in latitude  $31^{\circ}$ , its level may be stated at 13,000 feet, while yet, on their northern slopes, under the influence of radiation from the high lands of Thibet (11,500 feet in mean elevation) it attains a height of 16,600 feet. Such, indeed, is the influence of local circumstances, and especially of the extreme dryness which prevails aloft in the southern prolongation of the chain of the Andes, that in the western or maritime part of that chain, in lat.  $18^{\circ}$  S., the snow-line is found nearly 2700 feet higher than under the equator; and even so far as  $32\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  south, the volcano of Aconcagua, 1400 feet higher than Chimborazo, has, on one occasion, been seen *entirely free from snow, by the mere effect of evaporation*, being not at the time in a state of eruption. (Kosm. Tr., p. 329.)

According to the alternation of the seasons, the lower line of *actual* snow oscillates between limits more or less extensive, according to the difference of the summer and winter temperatures at the place; but besides this annual oscillation, successions, which appear to us casual, of cold, warm, dry, and wet seasons, winds, &c., give rise to fluctuations in the amount of accumulated snow, which manifest themselves in the slow alternate prolongation and recess of glaciers, a subject which M. de Humboldt passes over with slighter notice than we should have expected. The arduous and indefatigable researches of Professor Forbes, one of the greatest, if not the very greatest, of Alpine travellers since Saussure, and his ingenious theory of glacier motion, have heightened to an extraordinary degree the interest of this branch of terrestrial physics, and might, we



think, have secured his name a place beside those of Vernietz, Charpentier, and Agassiz, in the briefest possible mention of the subject.

The electricity of the atmosphere is a subject too inconsecutively studied, and too little understood, to admit of any distinct, general, and positive conclusions being drawn respecting it. We have ventured to hazard an opinion that the part it plays in phenomena, properly called meteorological, is rather that of an effect than a cause; whatever influence its development may have on organic life in stimulating the nerves and promoting the circulation of the juices (both we apprehend, much overrated). Our limits, however, forbid us to assign the grounds for this opinion, and the mention of organic life reminds us that we have yet another field to traverse in M. de Humboldt's guidance. But here too we shall imitate his own brevity; confining himself as he does to the *general* influence of temperature and climate on the distribution of organic forms, to the physiognomy of different countries imparted by the greater or less predominance of those families of plants which are called 'social,' and to the similar influence of elevation above the sea and increase of latitude; and waiving, as it would seem designedly and of purpose, all mention of a subject the most prominent and the most interesting in natural history. We allude to the local distribution of genera and species, not as affected simply by diversity of climate and soil, but by locality *as such*, according to laws which almost seem to have had reference not so much to the mere fitness of this or that climate, &c., for this or that species, as to some more general object, such as that of superinducing the utmost possible diversity of organism and assemblages of organised beings on the face of material creation. This forbearance is the more disappointing, because it is precisely from M. de Humboldt himself that the first impulse of philosophical speculation and inquiry in this direction was given, and that there is, therefore, no one to whom we should more naturally look up for large and general views on the subject, or for satisfactory impressions as to the aspect in which the facts actually present themselves to those who alone are fully competent to judge of them. In stating these great facts, it is by no means necessary to go into questions of origin (which he very properly declines to do). There may or there may not have been local centers of creation, whence, in all geological epochs, species have spread themselves. But the matter of fact, the observed *laws of collocation*, strongly marked as they are, appear of paramount importance, and constitute the most salient features of the geography of plants and animals. 'Each hemisphere,' says

M. de Humboldt in his Personal Narrative, 'produces plants of different species; and it is not by the diversity of climates that we can attempt to explain why equinoctial Africa has no Laurineæ and the New World no heaths; why the Calceolarieæ are found only in the southern hemisphere; why the birds of the continent of India glow with less splendid colours than those in the hot parts of America; finally, why the Tiger is peculiar to Asia, and the Ornithorhyncus to New Holland.'

The total diversity of all the plants and animals of New Holland from those of all other countries; the complete separation of the Old from the New World in their representation of natural families, not only in their living, but in many of their fossil productions, is part only of a general system of regional repartition which pervades the whole scheme of organic life: a fact of the first magnitude, whatever be the speculative aspect in which it may be regarded.

*Man*, 'subject in a less degree than plants or animals to the circumstances of soil and to meteorological conditions, and escaping from the control of natural influences by the activity of mind and the progressive advancement of intelligence,' forms every where an essential part of the life which animates the globe. In considering the great questions which ethnology presents, M. de Humboldt avows his conviction of the superior weight attributable to those arguments which support, over those which combat a community of origin and a gradual branching forth into established varieties or races. He observes, however, that,

'As in the vegetable kingdom and in the natural history of birds and fishes, an arrangement into many small families proceeds on surer grounds than one which unites them into a few sections embracing large masses; so also, in the determination of races, it appears preferable to establish smaller families of nations. In the opposite mode of proceeding, whether we adopt the old classification of Blumenbach into *five* races, . . . or that of Prichard into *seven* . . . it is impossible to recognise in the groups thus formed any true typical distinction—any general and consistent natural principle. The extremes of form and colour are separated indeed, but without regard to nations which cannot be made to arrange themselves under any of the above-named classes.'

Language is the main clue we have to guide us through the labyrinths of ethnology; but it is one which must be followed with caution, and with all the light which history can throw upon its application.

'Subjection to a foreign yoke, long association, the influence of a foreign religion, a mixture of races, even when comprising only a

small number of the more powerful and the more civilised immigrating race, have produced in both continents similarly recurring phenomena; viz. in one and the same race two or more entirely different families of languages; and in nations differing widely in origin, idioms belonging to the same linguistic stock.\*

Where history fails, however, as is the case with the barbarous nations of the New World, and those, which in other regions are fast disappearing before European encroachments, language, physical resemblance, and similarity of customs (when not traceable to general principles of human nature) are all the guides which are left to us in tracing the affiliation of races. That aiding and warning light withdrawn, it behoves us to be all the more scrupulously careful in collecting and preserving unimpaired and undistorted whatever vestiges of human language still subsist. And here we must enter our protest, we fear an unavailing one, against the supineness which suffers those invaluable monuments, the unwritten languages of the earth, to perish with a rapidity yearly increasing, without one rational and well concerted effort to save them in the only mode in which it can be done effectually, viz. by reducing them to writing *according to their exact native pronunciation* through the medium of a thoroughly well considered and digested Phonetic alphabet. About sixty well chosen, easily written, and *unequivocal* characters, completely exemplified in their use by passages from good writers in the principal European and eastern languages, would satisfy every want, without going into impracticable niceties; and we earnestly recommend the construction and promulgation of a manual of this kind for the use of travellers, voyagers, and colonists, as a matter of pressing urgency, to the consideration of philologists, ethnologists, and geographers, in their respective societies assembled.\*

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\* Many attempts at the construction of such alphabets have been made, but none at all satisfactory. That of Young (Lectures, ii. 276.) is perhaps the most complete in its analysis of speech, though still defective, and in some points erroneous—his system of characters wretched. Gilchrist's is perhaps the best known, and in profession nothing short of absolute universality, but its author (a Scotsman) was altogether defective in ear, and his examples in consequence self-contradictory—his system of writing confusion itself. The *Fonotipik hariktur*; devised by the ingenious Mr. PitmUn and his associates for the speedy and effectual abrogation of the English language, would have considerable merit were it not founded on an essentially English instead of a cosmopolitan view of the vowel sounds, as represented by European letters, and therefore sure to be rejected by every foreign philologist. Yet even this, enlarged to suit the

We have been so intent on the subject matter of the work before us, as to have left little space for comment on the mode of its presentation to the English reader. The author has been especially fortunate in his translator (translatress we should rather say, since, in the style of its execution, we have no difficulty in recognising the same admirable hand which gave an English garb to Baron Wrangell's Expedition to the Polar Sea.) So perfect a transfusion of the spirit and force of a very difficult original into another language, with so little the air of a translation, it has rarely been our fortune to meet with. To the editor it is indebted for several very interesting and instructive notes (to some of which we have had occasion specifically to draw the reader's attention) relating to a variety of subjects, on which, either from personal observation on the most extended scale, or from laborious and systematic discussion of the observations of others, he is entitled to every attention.

While the preceding pages were in progress, we have been favoured with the perusal, in proof sheets, of a portion of the second volume of the '*Kosmos*,' (translated and edited as above,) containing, under the title of '*Incitements to the Study of Nature*,' a series of beautiful and brilliant essays of the highest literary merit, and full of scholarship, classical research, and artistic feeling, on the reflex action of the imaginative faculty when excited by the contemplation of the external world, as exemplified in the production of poetic descriptions of nature (especially of wild and landscape scenery), and in landscape painting. For examples of the former kind, M. de Humboldt lays under contribution the literature of all ages and nations, from ancient India to modern Europe, entering largely into the influence exercised by the peculiar aspect of society in each on the development of this form of the poetic sentiment, which he regards, and justly, as the first expansion of the heart towards a recognition of the unity and grandeur of the *Kosmos*. In like manner the art of landscape painting is traced from its first origin as the mere background of historical composition or scenic decoration, to its grand developments in the seventeenth century—to 'Claude Lorraine, the idyllic painter of light and aerial distance, Ruysdael's dark forest masses and threatening clouds

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exigencies of the case, would be preferable for temporary use to the present no-system in which each traveller in his diary, and each missionary, in formal grammar and dictionary, confounds and for ever mangles, as seems good in his own eyes, the pronunciation he pretends to fix.

' Gaspar and Nicholas Poussin's heroic forms of trees, and the ' faithful and simply natural representations of Everdingen, ' Hobbima, and Cuyp.' The gradual emancipation of the art from its trammels, as a subordinate auxiliary, and its assumption of an ideal of its own embodying, are shown to be ever found in connexion with increasing knowledge and observation of nature consequent on advancing cultivation. To such poetic descriptions and depicted scenery, as well as to the view of exotic products assembled in collections, hot-houses, and museums, he traces much of that lively impulse which stimulates young and excitable minds to foreign travel for the sake of knowledge, and to the prosecution of physical study at home. These essays form a graceful and elegant episode, interposed between the more massive and austere divisions of the general subject, the ' Physical Description of the Universe,' which we have passed in review, and the ' History of the Contemplation of Nature'; and will be read with equal enjoyment by the poet, the artist, and the philosopher.

Of the ' History of the Contemplation of Nature' one section only has reached our hands: sufficient, however, to convey a notion, and to correct an impression we had formed, as to our author's intended mode of handling this part of his matter. The history with which he proposes to present us would appear to be not so much a history of Physical Science in the gradual development of its theories, as a *history of objective discovery*, a review of those steps in the progress of human cultivation which have prepared the way and furnished the materials for science such as we now possess it. With every successive expansion of society the views of mankind have become enlarged as to the extent and construction of the globe we inhabit, the objects it offers to contemplation, the elaborate structure of its parts, and its relation to the rest of the universe. Great events in the world's history have from time to time especially facilitated and promoted this enlargement of the horizon of observation; such as the migrations of nations, remarkable voyages, and military expeditions, bringing into view new countries, new products, new relations of climate. Great epochs too in the history of the knowledge of nature are those in which accident or thought has furnished artificial aids, new organs of sense and perception, by which man has been enabled to penetrate more and more deeply either into the profundity of space, or into the intimate constitution of the animate and inanimate objects which surround him. In tracing these epochs and following out the course of these events so far as they bear upon the object in view, availing himself of all the light which modern research has thrown

on the early history of civilisation, whether from the study of ancient monuments, or the critical comparison of written records, M. de Humboldt has opened out for himself a field nearly coextensive with literature itself, and one peculiarly fitted to his own powers and habits of thought, which, as our readers need not to be informed, have made its higher walks — *Æsthetics, History, and Antiquarian and Monumental Lore* — quite as familiar to him as those of Science. We should do injustice, however, both to him and to those whose office it may be to render an account of the further progress of this work, by further anticipation, and shall, therefore, content ourselves with adding that, should the conclusion correspond (as we doubt not) with these beginnings, a work will have been accomplished, every way worthy of its author's fame, and a crowning laurel added to that wreath with which Europe will always delight to surround the name of Alexander von Humboldt.

ART. VI. — 1. *Correspondence explanatory of the Measures adopted by her Majesty's Government for the Relief of Distress arising from the Failure of the Potato Crop in Ireland.*

2. *Commissariat and Board of Works Series, from November 1845 to August 1846.*

3. *Commissariat Series, from July 1846 to January 1847, and from January 1847 to March 1847.*

4. *Board of Works Series, from July 1846 to January 1847, and from January 1847 to March 1847.*

5. *Fisheries Series, from July 1846 to January 1847.*

6. *Correspondence relating to the State of the Union Workhouses in Ireland, from October 1846 to January 1847, and from January 1847 to February 1847.*

THE time has not yet arrived at which any man can with confidence say, that he fully appreciates the nature and the bearings of that great event which will long be inseparably associated with the year just departed. Yet we think that we may render some service to the public by attempting thus early to review, with the calm temper of a future generation, the history of the great Irish famine of 1847.\* Unless we are

\* We have endeavoured to gather up all the threads of this strange tissue, so that every circumstance of importance connected with the measures of relief may be placed on record; but our narrative does

much deceived, posterity will trace up to that famine the commencement of a salutary revolution in the habits of a nation long singularly unfortunate, and will acknowledge that on this, as on many other occasions, Supreme Wisdom has educed permanent good out of transient evil.

If, a few months ago, an enlightened man had been asked what he thought the most discouraging circumstance in the state of Ireland, we do not imagine that he would have pitched upon Absentecism, or Protestant bigotry, or Roman Catholic bigotry, or Orangeism, or Ribbandism, or the Repeal cry, or even the system of threatening notices and midday assassinations. These things, he would have said, are evils; but some of them are curable; and others are merely symptomatic. They do not make the case desperate. But what hope is there for a nation which lives on potatoes?

The consequences of depending upon the potato as the principal article of popular food, had long been foreseen by thinking persons; and the following observations extracted from a paper on the native country of the wild potato\*, published in the Transactions of the Horticultural Society of London for the year 1822, are a fair specimen of the opinions which prevailed on the subject previously to the great failure of 1845.

'The increased growth of the potato, not only in these kingdoms, but almost in every civilised part of the globe, has so added to its importance, that any information respecting it has become valuable. With the exception of wheat and rice, it is now certainly the vegetable most employed as the food of man; and it is probable that the period is at no great distance when its extensive use will even place it before those which have hitherto been considered the chief staples of life. The effect of the unlimited extent to which its cultivation may be carried, on the human race, must be a subject of deep interest to the political economist. The extension of population will be as unbounded as the production of food, which is capable of being produced in very small space, and with great facility; and the increased number of inhabitants of the earth will necessarily induce changes, not only in the political systems, but in all the artificial relations of civilised life. How far such changes may conduce to or increase the happiness of mankind, is very problematical, more especially when it is considered, that since the potato, when in cultivation, is very liable to injury from casualties of season, and that it is not at present known how to keep it in store for use beyond a few months, a general failure of the year's

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not, except in a few instances, extend beyond September 1847, and the progress of events after that date will form the subject of a separate article.

\* The author of this paper was the late Mr. Joseph Sabine, the Secretary to the Horticultural Society.

crop, whenever it shall have become the chief or sole support of a country, must inevitably lead to all the misery of famine, more dreadful in proportion to the numbers exposed to its ravages.

The important influence which has been exercised by this root over the destinies of the human race, arises from the fact that it yields an unusually abundant produce as compared with the extent of ground cultivated, and with the labour, capital, and skill bestowed upon its cultivation. The same land, which when laid down to corn, will maintain a given number of persons, will support three times that number when used for raising potatoes. 'A family in the West of Ireland, once located on ' from one to three or four acres of land, was provided for; a ' cabin could be raised in a few days without the expense of a ' sixpence; the potatoes, at the cost of a very little labour, supplied them with a sufficiency of food, with which, from habit, ' they were perfectly content; and a pig, or with some a cow, or ' donkey, or pony, and occasional labour at a very low rate of ' wages, gave them what was necessary to pay a rent, and for ' such clothing and other articles as were absolutely necessary, ' and which, with a great proportion, were on the lowest scale of ' human existence. The foundation of the whole, however, was ' the possession of the bit of land; it was the one, and the only ' one thing absolutely necessary; the rent consequently was high, ' and generally well paid, being the first demand on all money ' received, in order to secure that essential tenure; and only what ' remained became applicable to other objects. Although of the ' lowest grade, it was an easy mode of subsistence, and led to the ' encouragement of early marriages, large families, and a rapidly- ' increasing population, and at the same time afforded the proprietor very good return of profit for his land.'\*

The relations of employer and employed, which knit together the framework of society, and establish a mutual dependence and good-will, have no existence in the potato system. The Irish small holder lives in a state of isolation, the type of which is to be sought for in the islands of the South Sea, rather than in the great civilised communities of the ancient world. A fortnight for planting, a week or ten days for digging, and another fortnight for turf-cutting, suffice for his subsistence; and during the rest of the year he is at leisure to follow his own inclinations, without even the safeguard of those intellectual tastes and legitimate objects of ambition which only imperfectly obviate the evils of leisure in the higher ranks of society. The excessive

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\* Sir John Burgoyne's letter to the 'Times,' dated 6th October, 1847.



competition for land maintained rents at a level which left the Irish peasant the bare means of subsistence; and poverty, discontent, and idleness, acting on his excitable nature, produced that state of popular feeling which furnishes the material for every description of illegal association and misdirected political agitation. That agrarian code which is at perpetual war with the laws of God and man, is more especially the offspring of this state of society, the primary object being to secure the possession of the plots of land, which, in the absence of wages, are the sole means of subsistence.

There is a gradation even in potatoes. Those generally used by the people of Ireland were of the coarsest and most prolific kind, called 'Lumpers,' or 'Horse Potatoes,' from their size, and they were, for the most part, cultivated, not in furrows, but in the slovenly mode popularly known as 'lazy beds;' so that the principle of seeking the cheapest description of food at the smallest expense of labour, was maintained in all its force. To the universal dependence on the potato, and to the absence of farmers of a superior class, it was owing that agriculture of every description was carried on in a negligent, imperfect manner.\* The domestic habits arising out of this mode of subsistence were of the lowest and most degrading kind. The pigs and poultry, which share the food of the peasant's family, became, in course, inmates of the cabin also.

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\* The following description of the state of agriculture in West Clare, previously to the failure in the potato crop in 1845, is taken from a narrative by Captain Mann of the Royal Navy, who had for some time previously been stationed in that district, in charge of the Coast Guard; and when the distress commenced, he took an active and very useful part in assisting in the measures of relief. 'Agriculture at that period was in a very neglected state; wheat, barley, and oats, with potatoes as the food of the poor, being the produce. Of the first very little was produced, and that not good in quality; barley, a larger proportion and good: oats, much greater, but inferior for milling purposes. Various reasons were given for this inferiority in produce, the quality of the land and deteriorated seed being the cause generally assigned; but I would say that the population being content with, and relying on the produce of the potato as food — which had, with very few exceptions, hitherto proved abundant — there was a general neglect and want of any attempt at improvement. Green crops were all but unknown, except here and there a little turnip or mangel wurzel in the garden or field of the better class, — the former scarcely to be purchased. Even the potatoes were tilled in the easiest way, in beds (called "lazy beds"), not in drills, so that the hoe might in a very short time clear the weeds and lighten the soil.'

The habit of exclusively living on this root produced an entire ignorance of every other food, and of the means of preparing it; and there is scarcely a woman of the peasant class in the West of Ireland, whose culinary art exceeds the boiling of a potato. Bread is scarcely ever seen, and an oven is unknown.

The first step to improvement was wanting to this state of things. The people had no incitement to be industrious, to procure comforts which were utterly beyond their reach, and which many of them perhaps had never seen. Their ordinary food being of the cheapest and commonest description, and having no value in the market, it gave them no command of butcher's meat, manufactures, colonial produce, or any other article of comfort or enjoyment. To those who subsist chiefly on corn, other articles of equal value are available, which can be substituted for it at their discretion; or if they please, they can, by the adoption of a less expensive diet, accumulate a small capital by which their future condition may be improved and secured; but the only hope for those who lived upon potatoes was in some great intervention of Providence to bring back the potato to its original use and intention as an adjunct, and not as a principal article of national food; and by compelling the people of Ireland to recur to other more nutritious means of aliment, to restore the energy and the vast industrial capabilities of that country.

A population, whose ordinary food is wheat and beef, and whose ordinary drink is porter and ale, can retrench in periods of scarcity, and resort to cheaper kinds of food, such as barley, oats, rice, and potatoes. But those who are habitually and entirely fed on potatoes, live upon the extreme verge of human subsistence, and when they are deprived of their accustomed food, there is nothing cheaper to which they can resort. They have already reached the lowest point in the descending scale, and there is nothing beyond but starvation or beggary. Several circumstances aggravate the hazard of this position. The produce of the potato is more precarious than that of wheat or any other grain. Besides many other proofs of the uncertainty of this crop, there is no instance on record of any such failure of the crops of corn, as occurred in the case of potatoes in 1822, 1831, 1845, 1846, and 1847, showing that this root can no longer be depended upon as a staple article of human food. The potato cannot be stored, so that the scarcity of one year may be alleviated by bringing forward the reserves of former years, as is always done in corn-feeding countries. Every year is thus left to provide subsistence for itself. When the crop is luxuriant, the surplus must be given to the pigs; and when it is deficient,

famine and disease necessarily prevail. Lastly, the bulk of potatoes is such, that they can with difficulty be conveyed from place to place to supply local deficiencies, and it has often happened that severe scarcity has prevailed in districts, within fifty miles of which potatoes were to be had in abundance. If a man use two pounds of meal a-day (which is twice the amount of the ration found to be sufficient during the late relief operations), a hundred weight of meal will last him for fifty-six days, whereas a hundred weight of potatoes will not last more than eight days; and when it was proposed to provide seed-potatoes for those who had lost their stock in the scarcity of 1846, the plan was found impracticable, because nearly a ton an acre would have been required for the purpose.

The potato does not, in fact, last even a single year. The old crop becomes unfit for use in July, and the new crop, as raised by the inferior husbandry of the poor, does not come into consumption until September. Hence, July and August are called the 'meal months,' from the necessity the people are under of living upon meal at that period. This is always a season of great distress and trial for the poorer peasants; and in the districts in which the potato system has been carried to the greatest extent, as, for instance, in the barony of Erris in the county of Mayo, there has been an annual dearth for many years past. Every now and then a 'meal year' occurs, and then masses of the population become a prey to famine and fever, except so far as they may be relieved by charity.

In 1739 an early and severe frost destroyed the potatoes in the ground, and the helplessness and despair of the people having led to a great falling off of tillage in 1740, the calamity was prolonged to the ensuing year, 1741, which was long known as the *bliadhain an air*, or year of slaughter. The ordinary burial-grounds were not large enough to contain those who died by the road side, or who were taken from the deserted cabins. The 'bloody flux' and 'malignant fever,' having begun among the poor, spread to the rich, and numerous individuals occupying prominent positions in society, including one of the judges (Mr. Baron Wainwright), and the Mayor of Limerick (Joseph Roche, Esq.) and many others of the corporation, fell victims. Measures were adopted at Dublin on the principle of the English Poor Law, some of the most essential provisions of which appear to have been well understood in the great towns of Ireland in that day; and it was 'hoped, 'sir, such provision is made for the poor, the inhabitants of 'the city will discourage all vagrant beggars, and give their 'assistance that they may be sent to Bridewell to hard labour,

‘and thereby free themselves from a set of idlers, who are a scandal and a reproach to the nation.’ Soup kitchens and other modes of relief were established in different parts of the country, in which Primate Boulter and the Society of Friends took the lead, and numerous cargoes of corn were received from America, the arrival of which had been looked for with great anxiety. In only one point is there any decided difference between what then took place in Ireland and the painful events which have just occurred, after the lapse of upwards of a century. The famine of 1741 was not regarded with any active interest either in England or in any foreign country, and the subject is scarcely alluded to in the literature of the period. No measures were adopted either by the Executive or the Legislature for the purpose of relieving the distress caused by this famine. There is no mention of grants or loans; but an Act was passed by the Irish Parliament in 1741 (15 Geo. 2. cap. 8.), ‘For the more effectual securing the Payment of Rents, and preventing Frauds by Tenants.’\*

The failure of 1822, in the provinces of Munster and Connaught, was owing to a continued and excessive humidity, which caused the potatoes to rot after they had been stored in the pits, so that the deficiency of food was not discovered till late in the season. On the 7th May, 1822, a public meeting was held in London, which was attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the most eminent persons of the day, when a committee of no less than 109 of the nobility and gentry was formed, and a subscription was entered into, amounting, with the aid of a king’s letter, to 311,081*l.* 5*s.* 7*d.*, of which 44,177*l.* 9*s.* was raised in Ireland. Many excellent principles were laid down for the distribution of this large sum; and after reserving what was required for immediate relief, the balance, amounting to 87,667*l.*, was granted to various societies which had been established for the future and permanent benefit of the Irish peasantry.† A Committee also sat at the Mansion House at Dublin, which collected 31,260*l.* from various quarters, independently of the grants it received from the London Committee. Central Committees were established in each county town in the distressed districts, and Sub-Committees in each parish. The western portion of

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\* We are indebted for these particulars to Mr. M’Cullagh, who has lately collected the contemporary accounts of this famine. It appears that the farmers at this period did not dig their potatoes until about Christmas, and that few stored them at all for use.

† An interesting account by Mr. Bertolacci, of the manner in which this fund and the fund collected in 1831 were distributed, will be found in the ‘Morning Chronicle’ of the 25th November, 1847.

Ireland was also divided into three districts, to each of which a civil engineer was appointed for the purpose of employing the destitute in making roads, and the following sums were voted by Parliament for carrying on these and other Public Works set on foot with the same object of relieving the distress.\*

On the 24th June, 1822, 100,000*l.*,  
 ‘for the employment of the poor in Ireland and other purposes relating thereto, as the exigency of affairs may require.’

On the 23d July, 1822, 200,000*l.*  
 ‘to enable his Majesty to take such measures as the exigency of affairs may require.’

And on the 24th June, 1823, 15,000*l.* was voted,  
 ‘to facilitate emigration from the south of Ireland to the Cape of Good Hope.’

In 1831 another failure of the potato crop occurred in the counties of Galway, Mayo, and Donegal, upon which another meeting was held in the city of London, and one committee was established at the Mansion House, and another at the West End. Great exertions were made to raise subscriptions; a bazaar was held at the Hanover Square Rooms by many of the ladies of the nobility, presided over by the Queen in person; and there was a ball at Drury Lane Theatre, which was honoured by the presence of the King and Queen. The whole amount collected was 74,410*l.*; and besides this 40,000*l.* was granted by Parliament, part of which was expended on relief works, and part in the actual distribution of food. Besides these London Committees, two other Committees were formed at Dublin, through one of which (the Mansion House Committee†) 8569*l.* was

\* For the details of these operations see the following parliamentary papers:—

‘Copies of the Reports of Messrs. Griffith, Nimmo, and Killaly, the civil engineers employed during the late scarcity in superintending the Public Works in Ireland; 16th April, 1823 (249).’

‘Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the employment of the poor in Ireland; 16th July, 1823 (561).’

It is a remarkable testimony to the improvement effected by such works in the social habits of the people, that the district situated between the Shannon and Blackwater, which was opened in four directions by the roads executed by Mr. Griffith, although formerly the seat of the Desmond rebellion, and subsequently, in the year 1821, the asylum for Whiteboys, and the focus of the Whiteboy warfare, at which period four regiments were required to repress outrage, became perfectly tranquil, and continued so up to the commencement of the late calamity.

† The following remarkable passage is extracted from the Report

collected, and through the other (the Sackville Street Committee) 21,526*l*.

In each of the years 1835, 1836, and 1837, the potato crop failed in one or other of the districts in the West of Ireland, and sums amounting in the aggregate to 7572*l*. were expended from Civil Contingencies in relieving the distress thereby occasioned, to which was added the sum of 4306*l*. remaining from the English and Irish subscriptions of 1831.

In 1839 another failure occurred; and in all the Western and Midland Counties, the average price of potatoes in July and August was 7*d*. a stone, and of oatmeal 18*s*. or 19*s*. a cwt.; the former double, and the latter one-third more than the usual price at that time of the year. On this occasion Captain Chads, R. N., was deputed by the Government to assist the landlords in employing the destitute in constructing roads and other useful public works; and it appears from a report addressed by him to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, dated the 22d of August, 1839, that 5441*l*. was expended in this way, of which 1840*l*. was contributed by the Government. Towards the conclusion of his report Captain Chads made the following remarks:—‘A recurrence of these seasons of distress,

of the Dublin Mansion House Committee, dated the 22d October, 1831:—

‘But while the Mansion House Committee thus congratulate themselves and the subscribers upon the success of their efforts to avert famine and disease for a season from so considerable a portion of the island, they owe it also to themselves and the subscribers to avow their honest conviction that similar calls will be periodically made on public benevolence, unless a total change be effected in the condition of the Irish peasant. What means should be adopted to remedy these evils it is not the province of this Committee to suggest; but they deem it their duty to call the attention of the subscribers particularly to this state of things, in the hope of some remedy being discovered and applied before public benevolence is quite exhausted by repeated drains on its sympathy.’

On the 21st May, 1838, the Duke of Wellington made the following observations in the debate on the introduction of the Irish Poor Law:—‘There never was a country in which poverty existed to so great a degree as it exists in Ireland. I held a high situation in that country thirty years ago, and I must say that from that time to this there has scarcely elapsed a single year in which the Government has not at certain periods of it entertained the most serious apprehension of actual famine. I am firmly convinced that from the year 1806, down to the present time, a year has not passed in which the Government have not been called on to give assistance to relieve the poverty and distress which prevailed in Ireland.’

‘ which have been almost periodical hitherto, must, I fear, be  
 ‘ necessarily expected, so long as the present condition of the  
 ‘ poor continues, and whilst they subsist on that species of food,  
 ‘ which in a year of plenty cannot be stored up for the next,  
 ‘ which may be one of scarcity. A very great alleviation, how-  
 ‘ ever, of this evil is most confidently expected from the Poor  
 ‘ Law now establishing. I have conversed on this subject with  
 ‘ persons of every class of society, from one end of the country  
 ‘ to the other, and it is universally regarded as the promise of a  
 ‘ great blessing:—to the poor, by inducing more provident and  
 ‘ industrious habits; and by making it the interest of the land-  
 ‘ lords to give them employment; and to all other classes,  
 ‘ comfort and contentment, from the knowledge that the really  
 ‘ distressed are provided for, and that the country is generally  
 ‘ improving by the extension of employment.’

After this, urgent representations of distress were made in each year to the Irish Government and to the Poor Law Commissioners, until the summer of 1842, which was more than usually wet and unfavourable to vegetation, and it therefore again became necessary to have recourse to extensive measures of relief. Mr. Burke, the Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, was employed on this duty; and 3448*l.* was distributed by him, in aid of local subscriptions, in 121 separate districts; the aggregate sums raised in each case being expended, partly in public works on Captain Chads’ plan, and partly in giving gratuitous relief.\*

Other causes concurred with the natural tendency of every people to have recourse to the cheapest description of food, in encouraging the growth of a large population depending for its subsistence on the ‘potato. Ireland was essentially a grazing country until the artificial enhancement of prices caused by the Acts of the Irish Parliament passed in 1783 and 1784, for granting a bounty on the exportation, and restricting the importation of corn, occasioned an immediate and extraordinary increase of cultivation; and as, owing to the general want of capital, it was impossible to find tenants for large tillage farms, the stimulus intended to act exclusively on agriculture had a still more powerful effect in causing the subdivision of farms. The new

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\* The particulars of what took place on this occasion will be found in a letter from the Poor Law Commissioners to Sir J. Graham, dated the 9th June, 1842, and in a statement dated 18th August, 1842, prepared under the directions of the Irish Government, showing ‘the sums issued for the relief of distress in Ireland from the 17th June to the 17th August, 1842,’ &c.

occupiers also, being for the most part exceedingly poor, instead of paying their labourers in money, allowed them the use of small pieces of ground whereon they might erect cabins and raise potatoes, and their labour was set off, at so much a day, against the annual rent. The plan of dividing and subdividing for the purpose of making freeholders was carried to a great extent after 1792, when the elective franchise was restored to the Roman Catholics; and although the practice was far from being general, yet in some parts of the country, where particular families made it their object to contest or secure the county, it was carried to a very pernicious extent. Another powerful cause is, that the emoluments of the Roman Catholic priesthood, including the bishops, depend not only on the extent of the population, but also on its continued increase; and if the parish priests object to emigration and the consolidation of small holdings, and look with favour on early marriages, it is only what any other body of men, in their circumstances, would equally do. Lastly, the small holding and potato system offered the inducement of large rents, obtained at the smallest possible amount of cost and trouble. The embarrassed and improvident landlord, and the leaseholder whose only object it was to make the most of his short tenure, equally found their account in this state of things, and the result in both cases was that the farms were covered with hovels and miserable cottiers, in order, through them, to create profit-rents. When the failure of the potato forced all the 'squatters' and 'mock tenants' into notice, the owner of many a neglected estate was surprised by the apparition of hundreds of miserable beings, who had grown up on his property without his knowledge, and now claimed the means of support at his hands. The subsistence of the tenant was at the minimum; the rent was at the maximum; and the interval between the ignorant excitable peasantry and the proprietor in chief, was filled only by the middleman, whose business it was to exact rents, and not to employ labourers. The base and the capital of the column were there, but the shaft was almost entirely wanting.

The extent to which the welfare of the agricultural population, and, through them, of the rest of the community, is affected by the conditions under which landed property is held, has become fearfully apparent during the present social crisis. The dependence for good and evil of workman on master manufacturer, of subject on Government, of child on father, is less absolute than that of the Irish peasant upon the lord of the soil from which he derives his subsistence. This is a subject to which, if we would save ourselves and our country, it behoves



us to give our most earnest and careful attention at the present time. We cannot give landed proprietors the will and disposition (where it is wanting) to fulfil the important part they have to perform in the scheme of society, but we have it in our power to strike off the fetters which at present impede every step of their progress in the performance of the duty they owe to themselves and to those dependent on them.

One half of the surface of Ireland is said to be let off in perpetuity leases, with derivative and subderivative interests in an endless chain, so as to obtain profit-rents at each stage; and these leases are often open to the additional objection that they are unnecessarily burdensome or uncertain from the particular mode in which they are made; such as 'leases for lives renewable for ever by the insertion of other lives when the first-named are dead,' 'for three lives or thirty-one years,' and 'for three lives and thirty-one years.' Many proposals have at different times been made for the redemption of these various interests; but an arbitrary interference with the rights of property is to be avoided, and our object should rather be to give every prudent facility for the voluntary transfer of land and of the various interests connected with it, which must lead, by a safe but certain gradation, to that degree of improvement of the existing tenures which is necessary for the encouragement of agriculture. In Mayo and other western counties the old barbarous Irish tenure called *Rundale* (Scotch *runrig*) still prevails, which stops short of the institution of individual property, and by making the industrious and thriving responsible for the short-comings of the idle and improvident, effectually destroys the spring of all improvement. The cessation of this antiquated system is an indispensable preliminary to any progress being made in the localities where it exists; and this improvement may be effected by the landlords without any change in the law.

The master evil of the agricultural system of Ireland, however, is the law of Entail, and the Incumbrances which seldom fail to accumulate upon entailed estates. 'Proprietors of estates,' observes the author of an excellent pamphlet which has recently appeared on this subject\*, 'are too often but mere nominal owners, without influence or power over the persons holding under them. Their real condition is often pitiable, nor is it possible, in the great majority of cases, to retrieve the estates. The burden of debt, or the evils of improvident leases, are fastened upon the

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\* Observations upon certain Evils arising out of the present state of the laws of Real Property in Ireland, and Suggestions for remedying the same. — Dublin: Alex. Thom. 1847.

'land in such a manner as to convert the owner into a mere annuitant, often glad to obtain from a good estate a scanty annuity (after payment of the incumbrances thereon and the public burdens) for his own subsistence. Proprietor and tenant are equally powerless for good; and the whole kingdom suffers from the disorders which have resulted from this state of real property in Ireland.' And the author of another valuable publication on the same subject\* observes as follows: 'The evils resulting from settlements and entails may be regarded as arising from insecurity or uncertainty of tenure; because the possessor of the property is not in reality the owner; he cannot deal with it as an owner; he is merely a trustee for others; he has no interest in its future thorough permanent improvement, except so far as he may wish to benefit his successors; he can never reap the benefit himself; he cannot sell; he cannot dispose of a part, even though the alienation of a part might greatly enhance the value of the remainder; he holds it during his lifetime, as his predecessor held it, unaltered, unimproved, to transmit it to his heir clogged with the same restrictions, alike injurious to him and to his country. This is the case of an unembarrassed landlord.† But let us suppose,

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\* Observations on the Evils resulting to Ireland from the Insecurity of Title and the existing Laws of Real Property, with some Suggestions towards a Remedy. — Dublin: Hodges and Smith. London: Ridgway. 1847.

† It is perfectly true that the unembarrassed holder of an entailed estate is often not sufficiently owner of it to be able to do justice to it. He cannot sell a portion to improve the remainder, however much both the part sold and the part retained would be benefited by it. He can burden the estate to provide for younger children's portions, but not to carry on improvements which would increase its annual produce. Improvements are generally made out of capital, and not out of income. Owners of entailed estates, for the most part, live up to their means; and when they do not, their savings are seldom sufficient to carry on works of any importance. Over the capital sum representing the aggregate value of the estate, they have no command, except for purposes which make them poorer, and consequently still less able to execute any useful design. At the present crisis of our national affairs, it behoves us to consider what course will be the best both for the landowners and for the community at large. There is a fearful surplus population in Ireland and the north-western part of Scotland which must be provided for; while in England itself thousands of railway labourers and Irish paupers roam unemployed about the country; and the question is, whether by removing the obstacles which at present oppose the profitable employment of the enormous capital invested in land, we might not obtain new resources which

'as is unfortunately too often the case, that he has received the estate incumbered under a settlement, with a jointure to the widow of the late possessor, and a provision for daughters and younger sons. In what difficulties is he at once involved! this owner for life of a large tract of country with a long rent-roll, but in fact a small property! He cannot maintain his position in society without spending more than his income; debts accumulate; he mortgages his estate, and insures his life for the security of the mortgagee. Of course he cannot afford to lay out any thing on improvements; on the contrary, though perhaps naturally kind-hearted and just, his necessities force him to resort to every means of increasing his present rental. He looks for the utmost amount; he lets to the highest bidder, without regard to character or means of payment. If his tenants are without leases, he raises their rents. If leases fall in, he cannot afford to give the preference to the last occupier. Perhaps with all his exertions he is unable to pay the interest or put off his creditors. Proceedings are commenced against him, and the estate passes during his lifetime under the care of the worst possible landlord, a receiver under the Court of Chancery.\*

would enrich the owners of land, diffuse comfort and enjoyment in each locality, and help to provide for the unemployed population which is sitting like an incubus upon all the three kingdoms.

\* The following table gives the leading particulars relating to the estates under the management of the courts in Ireland during the years 1841, 1842, and 1843:—

*Court of Chancery.*

	Number of Causes.	Rental of Estates.			Arrears of Rent.					
					When Receiver was appointed.			When Receiver last accounted.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1841	698	598,635	13	10½	39,358	16	4½	347,226	14	10
1842	595	548,783	12	9	3,105	0	10	299,554	10	8
1843	764	563,022	2	4	39,265	13	1	290,292	4	10
Average of three years	686	570,147	2	11½	27,243	3	5	312,357	10	10
From 1836 to 1843 inclusive	316	132,675	2	3	56,168	6	6	87,849	0	11½

*Court of Exchequer.*

The arrears of rent have since greatly increased, although the object of the courts is confined to getting in the rents, improvements

The remedy for this state of things is simply the sale of the incumbered estate, or of a sufficient portion of it to enable the owner to discharge his incumbrances, and to place him in a position to do his duty towards the remainder. This is the master key to unlock the field of industry in Ireland. The seller, in all such cases, is known to be incapable of making a proper use of the land. The purchaser, on the other hand, may be safely assumed to be an improver. It is a natural feeling in which almost all men indulge, and purchases of land are seldom made without a distinct view to further profitable investments in improvements. 'To give every prudent facility for the transfer by sale of real property from man to man, by the adoption of a simple, cheap, and secure system of transfer, in lieu of the present barbarous, unsafe, and expensive system, so that real property could be bought and sold in Ireland with as much freedom and security as other property,' is therefore the object at which we ought to aim, and especially to encourage the investment of small capitals in the land, it being through the instrumentality of the small capitalists chiefly that the country can be civilised and improved. 'The purchasers would give extensive and permanent employment to numbers of people around them in carrying out that natural desire of man, the improvement of newly-acquired landed property; they would promote industry everywhere; they would greatly increase the value of land generally. By their number, all property in land would be rendered secure against revolutionary violence. The habits and example of men who had made money by industry, and who might invest their savings in land, would place the social system of Ireland on a solid basis. The best of the Protestants and Roman Catholics, those who had been careful and industrious, would be purchasers of land, and all would have a common interest in peace and order. That surplus population beyond the means of present employment, which now oppresses and embarrasses the country, might gradually be absorbed, and become a source of wealth and strength. Towns would everywhere improve, and new ones might arise by the extension of the railway system, spreading industry and civilisation among men now sunk in indolence and almost barbarism.'†

All the parties concerned in these transfers would be benefited by them. Lands are comparatively valueless to those who have

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being practically seldom attempted. The condition of the people in these neglected, and, with reference to their present state of cultivation, over-populated estates, is melancholy in the extreme.

\* 'Observations upon certain Evils,' &c. † *Ibid.*

no capital to improve them, and they are often justly felt to be a burden and a disgrace, because they entail duties which the nominal owners have no means of performing. The effect on the character and prospects of the whole body of landed proprietors would be as described in the following passage from the author to whom we are already so much indebted: ‘When men, however young, act under responsibility, they usually proceed with caution; if others will think and act for them, and provide for their wants, and secure them from poverty and danger, their own prudential faculties may become dormant; and a man, or any class of men so protected, are likely to exhibit deficiency in the qualities of prudence and good management of their affairs. But owners of land would not evince any such deficiency, if once they felt that they would be ruined, and their families also, if they were not governed by the same rules of prudence which other men must observe, and which necessarily enter into the proper management of all other descriptions of property. The present difficulties of sale of land, and the consequent protection afforded to entailed properties, are the chief reasons why so many persons of the class of proprietors are in difficulties. With more liberty, there would be more prudence and more attention to estates on the part of owners, from which they and the country would be great gainers.’\*

The manner in which the interests of the public at large are affected is correctly described in the following passage from the other pamphlet. ‘If these premises be correct; if employment with regular wages must be found for the peasantry; if capital be necessary, and the parties holding the land do not possess sufficient for this purpose; it follows, either that Government must continue to supply the capital required, not merely by a loan on an emergency, but as part of its regular system of action; or else that the land must pass into the hands of those who do possess the means of employing the people — of men who will carry on agriculture as a business, and will bring to their occupation the capital, the habits of business, and the energy and intelligence which have raised the commerce and manufactures of this nation to their present pre-eminence.’†

Her Majesty’s Government being deeply impressed with the importance of these views, introduced a Bill into Parliament in the Session of 1847, the object of which was to enable the

\* ‘Observations upon certain Evils,’ &c.

† ‘Observations on the Evils resulting to Ireland,’ &c.

owners of incumbered estates in Ireland to sell the whole or a portion of them, after the circumstances of each estate had been investigated by a Master in Chancery, with a view to secure the due liquidation of every claim upon it. The sale was not to take place without the consent of the first incumbrancer, unless the Court of Chancery should consider the produce sufficient to pay the principal and all arrears of interest, or unless the owner or some subsequent incumbrancer should undertake to pay to the first incumbrancer any deficiency which might exist, and give such security for the performance of his undertaking as the court might direct. This Bill passed the House of Lords, but was withdrawn in the Commons, owing to the opposition of some of the Irish proprietors, and to objections entertained by the great Insurance Companies, who are the principal lenders on Irish mortgages, to having their investments disturbed. The failure of the Bill was a national misfortune which cannot be too soon remedied.

The Government, however, did what was in its power. A system has existed in Ireland since the time of Queen Anne for the registration of all deeds affecting landed property; and of late years a similar registration has been established of all judgments relating to that description of property. The attention of the Lord Lieutenant has been called to the practicability of diminishing the delay and expense attending transfers of landed property, by the adoption of two simple practical measures, viz., that when searches have been made in the office of the Registrar of Deeds, copies should be recorded in the office, as well as given to the parties on whose behalf they are made; and that when judgments, &c., recorded in the office of the Registrar of Judgments have been satisfied, notice should be immediately sent to the Registrar, in order that such satisfaction may be recorded in the books of his office.\* The consequence of the neglect of the first of these obvious precautions was, that, after expensive searches had been made in the Registry Office, the same searches often had to be made again and again, at the same expense, at the instance of other parties, however limited the transactions might be for the security of which these inquiries into past transfers and incumbrances were made; and the consequence of the neglect of the other precaution was that, if, after a search had been made through the records deposited in the office of the Registrar of Judgments to ascertain whether any judgment had been passed against the estate, it appeared that any such judgment had been given, another search had to

be made in the courts of law, involving fresh loss of time and fresh expense, to ascertain whether it had been satisfied.

But it is time that we should resume our narrative.

The potato disease, which had manifested itself in North America in 1844\*, first appeared in these islands late in the autumn of 1845. The early crop of potatoes, which is generally about one-sixth of the whole, and is dug in September and October, escaped; but the late, or what is commonly called the 'people's crop,' and is taken up in December and January, was tainted after it arrived at an advanced stage of maturity. When the disease had once commenced, it made steady progress, and it was often found, on opening the pits, that the potatoes had become a mass of rotteness. Nevertheless, this year the attack was partial; and although few parts of the country entirely escaped, and the destruction of human food was, on the whole, very great, a considerable portion of the crop, which had been a more than usually large one, was saved. The wheat crop was a full average; oats and barley were abundant; and of turnips, carrots, and green crops, including a plentiful hay harvest, there was a more than sufficient supply. On the Continent, the rye crops failed partially, and the potato disease was very destructive in Holland, Belgium, France, and the west of Germany.

In the following year (1846) the blight in the potatoes took place earlier, and was of a much more sweeping and decisive kind. 'On the 27th of last month (July), I passed,' Father Mathew writes in a letter published in the *Parliamentary Papers*, 'from Cork to Dublin, and this doomed plant bloomed in all the luxuriance of an abundant harvest. Returning on the 3rd instant (August), I beheld with sorrow one wide waste of putrefying vegetation. In many places the wretched people were seated on the fences of their decaying gardens, wringing their hands, and wailing bitterly the destruction that had left them foodless.' The first symptom of the disease was a little brown spot on the leaf, and these spots gradually increased in number and size, until the foliage withered, and the stem became brittle, and snapped off immediately when touched. In less than a week the whole process was accomplished.† The

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\* The year 1845 was the second and worst in America; and in 1846, although it still extensively prevailed, the disease was of a milder type and only partially affected the crop.

† The following extract from Captain Mann's Narrative, descriptive of what took place at this period in the county of Clare, will be read with interest:—'The early culture of 1846 was in no way improved; a great proportion of the land was again tilled with potatoes, under

fields assumed a blackened appearance, as if they had been burnt up, and the growth of the potatoes was arrested when they were not larger than a marble or a pigeon's egg. No potatoes were pitted this year. In many districts where they had been most abundant, full-grown wholesome potatoes were not to be procured; and even in London and other large towns, they were sold at fancy prices, and were consumed as a luxury by the wealthy, — rice and other substitutes being had recourse to by the body of the people. The crop of wheat this year was barely an average one, while barley and oats, and particularly the former, were decidedly deficient. On the Continent, the rye and potato crops again failed, and prices rose early in the season above those ruling in England, which caused the shipments from the Black Sea, Turkey, and Egypt to be sent to France, Italy, and Belgium; and it was not till late in the season that our prices rose to a point which turned the current of supplies towards England and Ireland. The Indian corn crop in the United States this year was very abundant, and it became a resource of the utmost value to this country.

In the third year (1847) the disease had nearly exhausted itself. It appeared in different parts of the country, but the plants generally exerted fresh vigour and outgrew it. The result, perhaps, could not have been better. The wholesome distrust in the potato was maintained, while time was allowed for making the alterations which the new state of things required. Although the potatoes sown in Ireland in the year 1847 were estimated only at 1-5th or 1-6th of the usual quantity, it would have been a serious aggravation of the difficulties and discouragements under which that portion of the empire was suffering, if the disease had reappeared in its unmitigated form. The crops of wheat, barley, and oats, in almost every part of the United

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'the expectation that, as in former years, the late scarcity would be followed by a bountiful supply. The first alarm was in the latter part of July, when the potatoes showed symptoms of the previous year's disease; but I shall never forget the change in one week in August. On the first occasion, on an official visit of inspection, I had passed over thirty-two miles thickly studded with potato fields in full bloom. The next time the face of the whole country was changed; the stalk remained bright green, but the leaves were all scorched black. It was the work of a night. Distress and fear was pictured in every countenance, and there was a general rush to dig and sell, or consume the crop by feeding pigs and cattle, fearing in a short time they would prove unfit for any use. Consequently there was a very wasteful expenditure, and distress showed itself much earlier than in the preceding season.'



Kingdom, and in most of the neighbouring countries on the Continent, were this year, to use the epithet generally applied to them, magnificent; and it became more and more apparent on the brink of what a precipice we had been standing, as the unusually small remaining stock of old corn came to light, and the exhausted and embarrassed state to which every description of business had been reduced, notwithstanding the advantage of a good harvest, gradually declared itself.

Among the numerous causes which enhanced the difficulty of obtaining adequate foreign supplies at moderate rates during the most exigent period of the winter of 1846-7, one of the most embarrassing, was the sudden and extraordinary advance in freights, which occurred simultaneously in the ports of the United States of America, the Mediterranean, and the Black Sea. Vessels were not obtainable in the Black Sea and the Danube at less than 18*s.* and 22*s.* per quarter for corn, whereas the usual rates are 9*s.* and 11*s.*; while in the United States, where large shipments of grain, flour, and Indian corn, were going forward to Europe, the comparatively limited number of vessels caused the rates to run up to 9*s.* per barrel for flour, and 16*s.* and 18*s.* per quarter for Indian corn to British ports, the usual rates being 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per barrel of flour, and 8*s.* and 9*s.* per quarter for Indian corn.

On the 27th January, 1846, Sir Robert Peel proposed his measure for the relaxation of the duties on the importation of foreign corn, by which the scale of duties payable on wheat was to range from 4*s.* to 10*s.* per quarter, and Indian corn, which had previously been charged with the same duty as barley, was to pay only 1*s.* a quarter. This was to last till February, 1849, when an uniform duty of 1*s.* a quarter was to be charged on every description of grain. The bill passed the House of Lords on the 29th June, 1846; and Sir R. Peel announced his resignation in the House of Commons on the same day.

Immediately on the meeting of Parliament in January, 1847, Lord J. Russell introduced bills to suspend until the 1st September, 1847, the duties on foreign corn, and the restrictions imposed by the Navigation Laws on the importation of corn in foreign vessels; and he at the same time moved a resolution permitting the use of sugar in breweries; all which measures received the sanction of the Legislature. At the close of the same session, the suspension of the Corn and Navigation Laws was extended to the 1st March, 1848.

On the first appearance of the blight in the autumn of 1845, Professors Kane, Lindley, and Playfair, were appointed by Sir Robert Peel to inquire into the nature of it, and to suggest the

best means of preserving the stock of potatoes from its ravages. The result showed that the mischief lay beyond the knowledge and power of man. Every remedy which science or experience could dictate was had recourse to, but the potato equally melted away under the most opposite modes of treatment.

The next step was to order from the United States of America 100,000*l.* worth of Indian corn. It was considered that the void caused by the failure of the potato crop might be filled with the least disturbance of private trade and market prices, by the introduction of a new description of popular food. Owing to the prohibitory duty, Indian corn was unknown as an article of consumption in the United Kingdom.\* Private merchants, therefore, could not complain of interference with a trade which did not exist, nor could prices be raised against the home consumer on an article of which no stock was

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\* The following extract from Captain Mann's Narrative will give some idea of the difficulty of prevailing on the people to have recourse to the new food :— 'The first issue of Indian corn meal was in March 1846. It is impossible to conceive the strong prejudice against it; and I may here bear testimony to the benevolent and right feeling of the Rev. J. Kenny, P. P. Previously to the sale of the meal being commenced, a small portion was sent to me by Commissary-General (now Sir Edward) Coffin, which I placed in the hands of the reverend gentleman. He tried and approved of it; and in order to overcome any feeling against it, subsequently, with his two curates, all but entirely lived on the meal made into bread and stirabout, for nearly a fortnight, using all his influence to convince the people that the pernicious effects ascribed to it were untrue. Such conduct is above any praise of mine. The success attending this measure it is quite unnecessary for me to allude to; and the merchants, profiting by the example, commenced a trade new to them, by importing the article.' The use of Indian corn meal was adopted in hundreds of households, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, besides that of Father Kenny, for the purpose of overcoming the popular prejudice by the force of example. The Society of Arts awarded a gold medal to Mr. O'Brien, baker, of Leinster Street, Dublin, for the attention paid by him to the introduction of cheap popular modes of preparing Indian corn for use; and tens of thousands of pamphlets and printed sheets were distributed through the commissariat, containing instructions for cooking the Indian corn, and showing the people what other cheap descriptions of food were available to them. Those who know how difficult it is to induce a large population to adopt new habits, will be surprised at the success which attended these efforts. The 'yellow meal,' as it is called, was first known as 'Peel's brimstone,' and it was remembered that the attempt to introduce it in a former season of distress occasioned a popular commotion, arising from the absurd notion that it had the effect of turning those who ate it black.

to be found in the home market. Nevertheless, with a view to avoid as long as possible, the doubts and apprehensions which must have arisen if the Government had appeared as a purchaser in a new class of operations, pains were taken to keep the transaction secret, and the first cargoes from America had been more than a fortnight in Cork harbour before it became generally known that such a measure was in progress.

In order to distribute the food so obtained, central dépôts were established in various parts of Ireland, under the direction of officers of the Commissariat, with sub-dépôts under the charge of the Constabulary and Coast Guard; and when the supplies in the local markets were deficient, meal was sold from these dépôts at reasonable prices to Relief Committees, where any existed, and where they did not, to the labourers themselves. In the time of the heaviest pressure (June and July, 1846), one sub-dépôt retailed 20 tons of meal daily, and the issues from a single main dépôt to its dependencies amounted to 233 tons in one week.

The Relief Committees were formed, under the superintendence of a Central Commission at Dublin, for the purpose of selling food in detail to those who could buy it, and giving it to those who could not; the requisite funds being derived from private subscriptions, added to, in certain proportions, by Government donations. The Relief Committees also selected the persons to be employed on the Relief Works carried on under the superintendence of the Board of Works.

If the Irish poor had been in the habit of buying their food, as is the case in England, the object would have been attained when a cheap substitute had been provided for the potato; but as the labouring class in Ireland had hitherto subsisted on potatoes grown by themselves, and money-wages were almost unknown, it was necessary to adopt some means of giving the people a command over the new description of food. This was done by establishing a system of public works, in accordance with the previous practice on similar occasions, both in Ireland and in other countries.

These works, which consisted principally of roads, were undertaken on the application of the magistrates and principal cess-payers, under the act 9 & 10 Vict. c. 1., which was passed for the occasion, and the expense of executing them was defrayed by advances of public money, half of which was a grant, and half a loan to be repaid by the barony. The largest number of persons employed in this first season of relief was 97,000, in August, 1846.

The first symptoms of neglected tillage appeared in the

spring of 1846, and they were worst in those districts in which the Relief Works were carried on to the greatest extent. The improvements in progress on the Shannon and the arterial drainages were also impeded by the preference which the labourers showed for the Relief Works.

The measures of which we have been speaking, were brought to a close on the 15th August, 1846, and they may be considered to have answered their end. The scarcity being partial and local, the deficiency of one part of the country was supplied from the superabundance of others, and the pains taken to prevent the people from suffering want, led to their being better off than in ordinary years. Above all, Ireland was prepared by the course adopted during this probationary season of distress, as it may be called, to bear better the heavy affliction of the succeeding season. No misapplication of the funds deserving of notice took place, except in the instance of the Relief Works, the cause of which was as follows:—The landed proprietors of Ireland had long been accustomed to rely upon Government loans and grants for making improvements of various kinds, and the terms on which the Relief Works were to be executed being more advantageous than any which had been open to them for many years before, a rush took place from all quarters upon this fund, and the special object of relieving the people from the consequences of the failure of their accustomed food, was to a great extent lost sight of in the general fear, which in many cases was not attempted to be concealed, of being deprived of what they called ‘their share of the grant.’ This description of relief, therefore, instead of acting as a test of real distress, operated as a bounty on applications for public works from a class of persons who were at once charged with the administration of the relief, and were interested in the execution of the works. The result was, that while the applications amounted to 1,289,816*l.*, the sum actually sanctioned and expended was only 476,000*l.*, and great part even of this was merely yielded to the distressing appeals pressed on the Lord-Lieutenant on the plea of urgent local destitution, and of the lamentable consequences to be expected from allowing it to remain unrelieved. The other expenses connected with this season of relief were as follows:—Loans on Grand Jury presentments, 130,000*l.*; loss on the purchase and sale of grain, 50,000*l.*; given in aid of Relief Committees, 69,845*l.*; extra staff of the Board of Works, 7527*l.*: thus making the whole sum expended in relief to Ireland, up to the 15th August, 1846, 733,372*l.*, of which 368,000*l.* was in loans, and 365,372*l.*, in

grants. The sum raised by voluntary subscription through the Relief Committees was 98,000*l*.

The new and more decisive failure of the potato crop called for great exertions from Lord John Russell's recently formed Government, and the plan resolved upon was explained in the Treasury minute dated the 31st August, 1846, which was published for general information.\*

The system of public works was renewed by the act 9 & 10 Vict. c. 107., which was passed without any opposition in either House of Parliament. In order to check the exorbitant demands which had been made during the preceding season, the whole of the expense was made a local charge, and the advances were directed to be repaid by a rate levied according to the Poor Law valuation, which makes the landlords liable for the whole rate on tenements under 4*l*. yearly value, and for a proportion, generally amounting to one-half, on tenements above that value, instead of according to the grand jury cess (the basis of the repayments under the preceding act), which lays the whole burden upon the occupier. It was also determined that the wages given on the Relief Works should be somewhat below the average rate of wages in the district; that the persons employed should, as far as possible, be paid by task or in proportion to the work actually done by them; and that the Relief Committees, instead of giving tickets entitling persons to employment on the public works, should furnish lists of persons requiring relief, which should be carefully revised by the officers of the Board of Works; the experience of the preceding season having shown that these precautions were necessary to confine the Relief Works to the destitute, and to enforce a reasonable quantum of work.

The question which the Government had to decide, in regard to the renewal of the Commissariat operations, was of the most momentous kind. After all that had taken place during the last few months, it could not be expected that private trade would return, as a matter of course, to its accustomed channels. Neither the wholesale dealers in towns, nor the retail dealers in the rural districts, would lay in even their usual stocks of food; still less would they make the extraordinary provision required to meet the coming emergency, while they had before them the prospect of the Government throwing into the market supplies of food of unknown extent, which would make their outlay so much loss to them. The Government could not, therefore, cal-

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\* This minute will be found from pages 67 to 71 of the first Board of Works Series of 1847.

culate, as it did on the last occasion, on finding the private trade, by means of which the people are ordinarily supplied with food, proceeding as usual, and on being able to add more or less, at its discretion, to the resources which that trade afforded. Mercantile confidence in this branch of business was for the time destroyed. The trade was paralysed; and if this state of things had been suffered to continue, the general expectation of the Government again interfering would inevitably have created a necessity for that interference, on a scale which it would have been quite beyond the power of the Government to support.

Under these circumstances it was announced, — 1st. That no orders for supplies of food would be sent by the Government to foreign countries. 2ndly. That the interference of the Government would be confined to those western districts of Ireland in which, owing to the former prevalence of potato cultivation, no trade in corn for local consumption existed. And 3rdly. That even in these districts the Government dépôts would not be opened for the sale of food, while it could be obtained from private dealers at reasonable prices, with reference to those which prevailed at the nearest large marts. It was also determined to adhere to the rule acted upon during the preceding season, not to make any purchases in the local markets of Ireland, where the appearance of the Government as a buyer must have had the effect of keeping up prices and encouraging interested representations; and a promise was given that every practicable effort would be made to protect the supplies of food introduced by private traders, both while they were in transit and when they were stored for future consumption.

The Relief Committees of the preceding season were re-organised; the rules under which they had acted were carefully revised; and inspecting officers were appointed to superintend their proceedings, and keep the Government informed of the progress of events. A large proportion of the people of Ireland had been accustomed to grow the food they required, each for himself, on his own little plot of ground; and the social machinery by which, in other countries, the necessary supplies of food are collected, stored, and distributed, had no existence there. Suddenly, without any preparation, the people passed from a potato food, which they raised themselves, to a grain food, which they had to purchase from others, and which, in great part, had to be imported from abroad; and the country was so entirely destitute of the resources applicable to this new state of things, that often, even in large villages, neither bread nor flour was to be procured; and in country districts, the

people had sometimes to walk twenty miles before they could obtain a single stone of meal. The main object for which the Relief Committees were established, therefore, was to provide a temporary substitute for the operations of the corn-factor, miller, baker, and provision-dealer, and to allow time and furnish the example for a sounder and more permanent state of things; but they were not precluded from giving gratuitous relief in cases of more than ordinary destitution. The agency of the Relief Committees was this season almost universally substituted for the coast guard and constabulary dépôts, with the object of drawing out the resources of the country before the Government dépôts were had recourse to, of inducing the upper and middle classes to exert themselves, and of preventing a direct pressure of the mass of the people upon the Government dépôts, which in a time of real famine it would have been very difficult to resist.

Such was the plan resolved upon for the campaign of 1846-7, against the approaching famine, and we shall now show the result of the struggle.

It was hoped that a breathing-time would have been allowed at the season of harvest, to enable the Board of Works to re-organise their establishments on a scale proportioned to the magnitude of the task about to devolve on them, and to prepare, through their district officers, plans and estimates of suitable works for the assistance of the baronial sessions. This interval was not obtained. The general failure of the potato crop spread despondency and alarm from one end of Ireland to the other, and induced every class of persons to throw themselves upon the Government for aid. On the 6th of September, the Lord Lieutenant ordered all the discontinued works under the 9 & 10 Vict. c. 1. to be recommenced, and sessions were rapidly held in all the southern and western counties of Ireland, at which roads were presented in the mass, under the 9 & 10 Vict. c. 107., the cost of which, in some cases, much exceeded the annual rental of the barony. The resident gentry and rate-payers, whose duty it was to ascertain, as far as possible, the probable amount of destitution in their neighbourhood, the sum required to relieve it, and the works upon which that sum could best be expended, and who had the necessary local knowledge, in almost every case devolved these functions upon the Board of Works, who could only act on such information as they could obtain from naval and military officers and engineers, most of whom were selected from among strangers to the district, in order to prevent undue influence being used. After that, to advance the funds; to select the labourers; to superintend the work; to pay the

people weekly; to enforce proper performance of the labour; if the farm works were interrupted, to ascertain the quantity of labour required for them; to select and draft off the proper persons to perform it; to settle the wages to be paid to them by the farmers, and see that they were paid; to furnish food, not only for all the destitute out of doors, but in some measure for the paupers in the workhouse, were the duties which the Government and its officers were called upon to perform. The proprietors and associated rate-payers having presented *indefinitely*, said it was the fault of the Government and its officers if the people were not instantly employed, and these officers were blamed, even by persons of character and understanding, if they were not at once equal to execute the duties which in this country are performed in their respective districts by thousands of country gentlemen, magistrates, guardians, overseers, surveyors, &c., resident throughout the country, and trained by the experience of years to the performance of their various functions. The Board of Works became the centre of a colossal organisation; 5000 separate works had to be reported upon; 12,000 subordinate officers had to be superintended. Their letters averaged upwards of 800 a-day, and the number received on each of the following days was —

January 4th	-	- 3104	April 19th	-	- 4340
February 15th	-	- 4900	May 17th	-	- 6033 *

The strain on the springs of society from this monstrous system of centralisation was fearful in the extreme. The Government, which ought only to mediate between the different classes of society, had now to bear the immediate pressure of the millions on the sensitive points of wages and food. The opposition to task-work was general, and the enforcement of it became a trial of strength between the Government and the multitude. The officers of the Board were in numerous instances the objects of murderous attacks, and it became necessary, for the preservation of the whole community, to have recourse to the painful expedient of stopping the works whenever cases of insubordination or outrage occurred.

Meanwhile the number of persons employed on the works was

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\* A member of the Board of Works, writing to a friend, observed as follows: — 'I hope never to see such a winter and spring again. I can truly say, in looking back upon it, even now, that it appears to me, not a succession of weeks and days, but one long continuous day, with occasional intervals of nightmare sleep. Rest one could never have, night nor day, when one felt that in every minute lost a score of men might die.'



rapidly on the increase. The utmost exertions of two sets of inspecting officers, one under the Board of Works, and the other under Sir R. Routh, were insufficient to revise the lists, and the Lord-Lieutenant in vain directed that no person rated above 6*l*. for the Poor-law cess should, except under very special circumstances, be eligible for employment. Thousands upon thousands were pressed upon the officers of the Board of Works in every part of Ireland, and it was impossible for those officers to test the accuracy of the urgent representations which were made to them. The attraction of money wages regularly paid from the public purse, or the 'Queen's pay,' as it was popularly called; led to a general abandonment of other descriptions of industry, in order to participate in the advantages of the Relief Works. Landlords competed with each other in getting the names of their tenants placed on the lists; farmers dismissed their labourers, and sent them to the works; the clergy insisted on the claims of the members of their respective congregations; the fisheries were deserted; and it was often difficult even to get a coat patched or a pair of shoes mended, to such an extent had the population of the south and west of Ireland turned out upon the roads. The average number employed in October was 114,000; in November, 285,000; in December, 440,000; and in January 1847, 570,000. It was impossible to exact from such multitudes a degree of labour which would act as a test of destitution. Huddled together in masses, they contributed to each other's idleness, and there were no means of knowing who did a fair proportion of work and who did not. The general enforcement of the system of task work had justly been considered necessary to stimulate the industry of the labourers on the Relief Works; but when this point had been carried, after a hard struggle, the old abuse re-appeared in the aggravated form of an habitual collusion between the labourers and the overseers who were appointed to measure their work; so that the labourers, if they could be so called, were not only as idle as ever, but were enabled withal to enjoy a rate of wages which ought only to have been the reward of superior industry.

The plan of the Labour Rate Act (9 & 10 Vict. c. 107.) was based on the supposition that the great majority of the landlords and farmers would make those exertions and submit to those sacrifices which the magnitude of the crisis demanded, leaving only a manageable proportion of the population to be supported by the Board of Works; and the act would probably have answered its object, if a larger, instead of a smaller, number of persons than usual had been employed in the cultivation and improvement of the land, and the Relief Committees had put

only those who were really destitute upon the lists. Including the families of the persons employed, upwards of two millions of people were maintained by the Relief Works, but there were other multitudes behind, including often the most helpless portion of the community, for whom no work could be found. The Relief Works did not always furnish a subsistence even for those who were employed on them. The wages, paid regularly in money, were higher than any which had ever been given for agricultural labour in Ireland, but at the existing prices of food, they were insufficient for the support of a family, melancholy proof of which was afforded by daily instances of starvation in connexion with the Relief Works.\* The fearful extent to which the rural population had been thrown for support upon the Board of Works also threatened a disastrous neglect of the ordinary tillage. If the people were retained on the works, their lands must remain uncultivated. If they were put off the works, they must starve. A change of system had become inevitable, and when Parliament met in the end of January, it was announced that the Government intended to put an end to the public works, and to substitute for them another mode of relief, which will be hereafter described.

Meanwhile the pressure on the Relief Works was continually on the increase, and the persons daily employed who, in January, had been 570,000, became, in February, 708,000, and in March amounted to the enormous number of 734,000†, representing,

\* An officer of the Board of Works, observing the emaciated condition of the labourers, reported that, as an engineer, he was ashamed of allotting so little task-work for a day's wages, while, as a man, he was ashamed of requiring so much. In some districts proof of attendance was obliged to be considered sufficient to entitle the labourer to his wages. The exhausted state of the workmen was one main cause of the small quantity of work done compared with the money expended. The Irish peasant had been accustomed to remain at home, cowering over his turf fire, during the inclement season of the year, and exposure to the cold and rain on the roads, without sufficient food or clothing, greatly contributed to the prevailing sickness. In order to obviate this as far as possible, a circular letter was issued by the Board of Works (first series of 1847, page 499.) directing that, in case of snow or heavy rain, the labourers should merely attend roll call in the morning, and be entered on the pay list for half a day's pay; and if it afterwards became fine, they were to come to work, which would entitle them to a further allowance.

† In this month (March) the expenditure upon the Relief Works was, —

at a moderate estimate of the average extent of each family, upwards of three millions of persons. At last, the Government, seeing that the time suited for agricultural operations was rapidly passing away, and that the utmost exertions made on the spot had failed in keeping the numbers in check, took the matter into its own hands, and directed that on the 20th March, 20 per cent. of the persons employed should be struck off the lists; after which successive reductions were ordered, proportioned to the progress made in bringing the new system of relief into operation in each district. These orders were obeyed, and the crisis passed without any disturbance of the public peace or any perceptible aggravation of the distress. The necessary labour was returned to agriculture, and the foundation was laid of the late abundant harvest in Ireland, by which the downward progress of that country has been mercifully stayed, and new strength and spirits have been given for working out her regeneration. In the first week in April the persons employed on the Relief Works were reduced to 525,000; in the first week in May to 419,000; in the first week in June to 101,000; and in the week ending the 26th June to 28,000. The remaining expenditure was limited to a sum of 200,000*l.* for the month of May, and to the rate of 100,000*l.* a month for June, July, and the first fifteen days of August, when the act expired. These sums were afterwards permitted to be exceeded to a certain extent, but the object was attained of putting a curb on this monstrous system, and bringing it gradually and quietly to a close. Great exertions were made, and a heavy expense was incurred, to leave the roads and other works in progress in a safe and passable state as far as they had gone; but their completion must depend upon the parties locally interested in them. From the first commencement of the Relief Works in February

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Labour and Plant	-	-	-	£1,024,518
Extra Staff	-	-	-	26,254

Per Month - - - £1,050,772

In the week ending 13th March, 1847, the expenditure for all the above services was - £249,105  
 which gives a daily average for that week - 43,184  
 On the 5th March there was remitted into the interior for carrying on Relief Works - 68,000  
 On the 30th March, only - - - 16,000  
 These two are the extremes during the month.  
 The mean (for the month) of daily remittance - 38,920

1846, repeated warnings were given that the object was not the works themselves, but the relief of the prevailing destitution through the employment afforded by them; that the works would be closed as soon as they were no longer required for that purpose; and that if the proprietors desired to complete them, they might do so under the ordinary system of Government loans made on the security of county presentments.\*

This system threw off a shoo, the history of which it is necessary to trace. In order to impose some limits on what threatened to become a gigantic system of permanently supporting one portion of the community at the expense of the remainder, and of making provision out of the taxes for classes of undertakings which properly belong to the economy of private life, the application of the public money under the Labour Rate Acts was strictly limited to works of a public character, which were not likely to be undertaken except for the purpose of giving relief. This condition was generally objected to in Ireland; and although no disposition was evinced to take advantage of the loans which the Government was ready to make under the General Improvement and Drainage Acts, a great desire was expressed that the funds advanced under the Labour Rate Act should be employed on what were called reproductive works. The Lord Lieutenant, having obtained the sanction of the Government, yielded to this general feeling, and authorised presentments to be made for the drainage and subsoiling of the estates of individuals, provided they consented to their estates being charged with the repayment of the sums advanced. This was the arrangement which acquired so much notoriety under the name of 'Labouchere's Letter,' owing to its having been announced by the publication of a letter from Mr. Labouchere, who then held the office of Secretary for Ireland, to the Board of Works, dated 5th October, 1846; but the result did not answer the expectations which had been formed. The aggregate amount presented 'under the Letter,' was 380,607*l.*, of which presentments were acted on to the gross amount of 239,476*l.* The sum actually expended was about 180,000*l.*; and the largest number of persons at any one time employed was 26,961, in the month of May 1847. Some incidental good was done by the example of the advantages of thorough draining, and of

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\* The proceedings of the Government in reference to this point, are fully explained in a letter from Mr. Trevelyan to Colonel Jones, and in the accompanying Treasury Minute, printed in the first Board of Works Series for 1847, pp. 97—100.

the proper mode of executing it; but, as a remedy for the widespread calamity, the plan totally failed.

Upon this a two-fold agitation sprang up. Some landed proprietors required that their liability should be confined to the relief of the destitute on their own estates; while others demanded that, instead of being employed on the roads, the people should be paid for working on their own farms. Both these movements were steadily resisted by the Government. The objection to the first was, that if the inhabitants of the pauperised districts had been separated from the rest in the administration of the measures of relief, they must either have starved or have become entirely dependent on the Consolidated Fund; while, if the other plan had been adopted, the entire cost of carrying on the agriculture of the country would have been transferred to the Government, without its being possible either to test the applications for assistance, or to enforce a proper amount of exertion. This last scheme was most clamorously urged in the county of Clare, and it may be considered as the masterpiece of that system of social economy according to which the machine of society should be worked backwards, and the Government should be made to support the people, instead of the people the Government. The Government was also to provide tools and seed as well as wages, but the rent was to be received by the same parties as before.

Baronial presentments were authorised for the construction of railway earthworks, as relief works under the 9 & 10 Vict. c. 107., subject to the conditions required for the fulfilment of the object of the Act\*; but advantage was taken of this permission only in two baronies of the county of Cork, where the Waterford and Limerick railway was aided from this source.

The silver currency, which had previously sufficed for a people who lived upon potatoes grown by themselves, and paid their rent by so many days' labour, fell short of what was required to pay the labourers employed on the numerous Relief Works carried on simultaneously in different parts of the country, and a large supply was therefore distributed, by means of a Government steamer, among the principal towns on the coast of Ireland. On the cessation of the Relief Works, the greater part of this coin accumulated in the banks, which were relieved by the transmission of the surplus to the Cape of Good Hope to aid in carrying on the Caffre war.

In the Commissariat branch of the operations, every pledge which had been given was strictly adhered to, and confidence

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\* See page 44. of the first Board of Works Series of 1847.

having been re-established, prodigious efforts were made by the mercantile community to provide against the approaching scarcity. The whole world was ransacked for supplies; Indian corn, the taste for which had by this time taken root in Ireland, rose to a higher price than wheat; and the London and Liverpool markets were again and again swept by the enterprising operations of the Irish dealers, who, from an early period, appreciated the full extent of the calamity, and acted upon the principle that the gulf which had opened in Ireland would swallow all that could be thrown into it, and remain still unsatisfied. In February, 1847, the beneficial effect of these measures began to be apparent. On the 24th of that month, Mr. N. Cummins, a respectable merchant of Cork, wrote as follows to Mr. Trevelyan:—

‘From this gloomy picture I turn to the supply of food, and am happy to say that in this quarter the importations, both direct and from England, during the past month, have been very large; heavy cargoes of maize continue almost daily to arrive, and I feel persuaded that the stocks of bread stuffs generally are accumulating here to a much larger amount than some of our dealers would have it believed. Prices cannot, however, be quoted as more than a turn below the extreme point yet; they stand as follows: say Indian corn by retail, 17*l.* 15*s.* and 18*l.* per ton; Indian meal to 19*l.*; oatmeal, 25*l.*; wheaten meal, 19*l.* to 20*l.* per ton.’

On the 12th March, the same gentleman wrote—

‘Our market for Indian corn seems at length quite glutted; the arrivals within the last few days have been so extremely numerous that the trade is unable to take off the supply, or indeed to find sufficient stowage in the city. Several cargoes for discharge here are at this moment lying under demurrage, and I may quote the article 15*s.* to 20*s.* per ton cheaper than a fortnight since.’

And on the 19th—

‘There are at present over 100 sail, containing an aggregate amount of bread stuffs not short of 20,000 tons, afloat in our harbour, and maize, which a month since brought freely 18*l.* per ton, is this day offered in small parcels at 15*l.*’

And on the same day Father Matthew wrote to Mr. Trevelyan as follows:—

‘For the first time since the Lord visited this unhappy land with famine, I address you with delight. The markets are rapidly falling; Indian corn from 16*l.* to 15*l.* per ton. The vast importations, and the still more vast exportations from America, have produced this blessed effect.’

On the 26th March, Mr. Cummins states—

‘I have now to report the continuance each day of numerous arrivals of food cargoes here; the additional number during the present week (mostly maize laden) considerably exceeds 100 sail, several being American ships of large burthen, and although many have proceeded to other ports, the number afloat, waiting orders or sale, has been fully doubled. I cannot estimate the fleet this day in our harbour at less than 250 sail, nor the contents at much under 50,000 tons. Indian corn may be purchased at 14*l.* by the cargo, and retailed at 15*l.* per ton.’

It now began to be perceived that more was to be expected from the collective exertions of the merchants of the United Kingdom, than from the Admiralty or the Commissariat. The whole quantity of corn imported into Ireland in the first six months of 1847 was 2,849,508 qrs., which was worth at the then current prices, 8,764,943*l.*; and the Irish market was, to use the words of the present Lord Lieutenant, ‘freer, cheaper, and better supplied, than that of any country in Europe where distress prevailed, and where those measures of interference and restriction had been unwisely adopted which were successfully resisted here.’ The price of Indian corn, which in the middle of February had been 19*l.* a-ton, was reduced at the end of March to 13*l.*, and at the end of August to 7*l.* 10*s.* a-ton; and such was the quantity of shipping which flocked to the United States on the first intelligence of the unusual demand for freight, that the rate for the conveyance of corn to the United Kingdom, which had been as high as 9*s.* per barrel during the winter months, was as low as 4*s.* 6*d.* in May, and has since fallen to 1*s.* 9*d.* It may safely be asserted that these results would not have been obtained, if the great body of our English and Irish merchants and shipowners, instead of having free scope given to their exertions, had been left under the discouraging impression that all their calculations might be upset by the sudden appearance in the foreign market of Government vessels and Government orders for supplies. The noble harbour of Cork was established as the house of call and entrepôt for the grain ships bound to every part of Western Europe; and the merchant being now free either to sell on the spot or to re-export, Ireland began to enjoy the benefit of her admirable commercial position, by getting the first, and largest, and cheapest supply.

Nevertheless, the public establishments were not idle. Upwards of 300,000 quarters of corn were purchased from time to time to supply the Government depôts on the western coast of Ireland, and large stores of biscuit and salt meat, which had been laid up at the different military stations in the year 1843,

in anticipation of popular disturbances arising out of the repeal movement, were now applied to the relief of the people.\* One of the consequences of the change from a potato to a corn diet, was, that the means of grinding were seriously deficient. The powerful Admiralty mills at Deptford, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Malta, besides two large hired mills, were, therefore, constantly employed in grinding the corn bought by the Commissariat, leaving the mill power of Ireland to the private importers of grain into that country; and hand-mills, on the principle of the old Irish Quern, were made for distribution in the most distressed districts; while others, constructed on an improved principle, were procured from France. Thirty-four large depôts were established on the western side of Ireland, from Dunfanaghy, in the most northern part of Donegal, to Skibbereen, in the south-west of the county of Cork: and the sales were made as far as possible to the Relief Committees, with the double object of drawing forth the resources and activity of the upper classes, and of preventing an indiscriminate pressure upon the depôts, which it would have been difficult to resist. Several ships of war were moored in convenient situations, and used as store-ships. The largest and most powerful war-steamers, reinforced when the occasion required it, by sailing vessels, were appropriated to the conveyance of the

\* The following shows the extent of the Government interference in the supply of food in the two seasons of 1845—46 and 1846—47:—

	Reduced to general de- nomination of quarters.	Cost.
Total quantity of Indian Corn and Oatmeal provided for the Relief Service during the first season of distress, up to August 1846	98,810	£ 163,240
Of this quantity there remained in store at the close of the first season of the operations	14,575	24,073
Total quantity of provisions of all kinds (Indian Corn, Wheat, Barley, the meal of those grains, Rye-meal, Biscuit, Peas, Beans, and Rice) provided for the Relief Service, during the second season of distress up to September 1847	289,335	672,767
	303,910	696,840
There remained in store at the close of the second season of the operations, about	108,960	249,836



meal from the mills in England to the depôts in Ireland, and every other available steamer, not excepting the Admiralty yacht, was employed in making the necessary transfers between the depôts, and in conveying the supplies which the Relief Committees had purchased.

The highest praise to which these great operations are entitled is, that they were carried through without any sensible disturbance of the ordinary course of trade, and that in some important respects they even gave new life and development to it. The purchases were all made in the home market, and care was taken never to give the highest current price. The sales were made at the wholesale price of the nearest large mart, with a reasonable addition for the cost of carriage, &c. When supplies of food could be obtained elsewhere, the depôts were closed. Private merchants, therefore, imported largely in the face of the Government depôts; while in the remote western districts the Commissariat acted as pioneers to the ordinary trade, and led the way to habits of commercial enterprise where before they had no existence.

There was the same general pressure for the premature opening of the depôts as for the early commencement of Relief Works, but in this case it was successfully resisted. It was explained that the Government depôts were intended to be a last resource to supply the deficiencies of the trade, and not to take the place of that trade; and that if the depôts were opened while the country was still full of the produce of the late harvest, that produce would be exported before the spring supplies arrived from America and the Black Sea, and the population would become entirely dependent upon the depôts, which must in that case soon come to a discreditable and disastrous stop. Meanwhile, great exertions were made to protect the provision trade, and the troops and constabulary were harassed by continual escorts. The plunder of bakers' shops and bread-carts, and the shooting of horses and breaking up of roads, to prevent the removal of provisions, were matters of daily occurrence; and at Limerick, Galway, and elsewhere, mobs prevented any articles of food from leaving the towns, while the country people resisted their being carried in. Convoys under military protection proceeded at stated intervals from place to place, without which nothing in the shape of food could be sent with safety.

As many as 1097 Relief Committees were established under the superintendence of the Commissariat; while 199,470L\* was

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\* This was the amount of the private subscriptions upon which Government donations were made; but other large sums were raised

subscribed by private individuals, and 189,914*l.* was granted by the Government (making together 389,384*l.*) in support of their operations.

One of the functions of these committees was to provide supplies of food for sale at the current market price; and when the rise of prices began to be seriously felt, the Government was called upon from every part of Ireland, to permit the grants of public money made to the committees to be employed in reducing the price of provisions to that of ordinary years. To this demand it was impossible for the Government to accede. In 1845-6 the scarcity was confined to a few districts of Ireland, while there was abundance every where else. The question therefore at that time was a money one, and all that was required to relieve the distress, was to purchase a sufficient

by local Irish subscriptions, through the medium of some of the Relief Committees, of which no account was furnished to the Government, because the Committees concerned would not submit to the rule of selling at cost price except in cases of extreme destitution. Large funds were also administered by private individuals, quite independently of the Local Relief Committees; of which class of operations the following account of the expenditure of a Protestant clergyman in the south-west of Ireland, with a parish of 10,000 inhabitants, no resident gentry, not a single town in the whole of it, nor a road through the greater part of it, may be taken as a specimen:—

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Gratuitous aid of every sort - -	306	6	0
Loss by sale of food under market price, when exorbitant - -	208	9	0
Payment of labour — making road to the bog, and other public works - -	150	10	0
Seed-corn, wheat, oats, and barley - -	300	0	0
Turnip seed - -	15	0	0
Fishing materials - -	150	10	6
	<hr/> £1,130 15 6 <hr/>		

Funds of this sort administered by benevolent and public-spirited individuals in Ireland, were generally supplied by the exertions of their relations and friends, or by grants from societies in England and elsewhere. It was a common practice for ladies in England to have parishes assigned to them in Ireland, and each lady raised all she could, and made periodical remittances to the clergyman of her adopted parish, receiving accounts from him in return of the manner in which the money was expended. The self-denial necessary to support this charitable drain was carried to such an extent at Brighton and elsewhere, that the confectioners and other tradespeople suffered severely in their business.

quantity of food elsewhere, and to send it into the distressed districts. In 1846-7, on the contrary, the scarcity was general, extending over all Western Europe, and threatening a famine in other quarters besides Ireland. The present question, therefore, was not a money, but a food question. The entire stock of food for the whole United Kingdom was insufficient, and it was only by carefully husbanding it, that it could be made to last till harvest. If provisions had been cheapened out of the public purse, consumption would have proceeded in a time of severe scarcity at the same rate as in a time of moderate plenty; the already insufficient stock of food would have been expended with a frightful rapidity, and in order to obtain a few weeks of ease, we should have had to endure a desolating famine. Those Relief Committees which attempted to follow this plan speedily exhausted their capital: and private dealers (who necessarily lay in their stock at the current market price, whatever that may be) retired from the competition with public bodies selling food at prices artificially reduced by charitable subscriptions and grants out of national funds.

The other function of the Relief Committees was to give gratuitous aid in cases of extreme destitution, and this was well performed by them to the extent of their means. As the distress increased, the distribution of cooked food by the establishment of soup kitchens, was found the most effectual means of alleviating it. The attention of the committees was, therefore, generally directed to this object by the Inspecting Officers. Boilers were manufactured and sent to Ireland in great numbers, and Government donations were now in every case made equal in amount to the private subscriptions ('pound for pound'), and in cases of more than usual pressure, twice or three times that amount was given. This mode of giving relief was not found to be attended with any serious abuse. The committees expended in a great measure their own money, which made them more careful in seeing that it was laid out with the greatest possible advantage and economy; and as the ration of cooked food distributed by them was not an object of desire to persons in comfortable circumstances, as money wages were, it acted in a great degree as a test of destitution. The great defect of this system of relief was, that being voluntary, it could not be relied on to meet the necessities of a numerous population in a period of great emergency, and the difficulty of obtaining private subscriptions was often greatest in the most distressed districts.

The point at which we had arrived, therefore, at the commencement of the year 1847, was, that the system of public works, although recommended by the example of all former

occasions on which relief had been afforded to the people of Ireland in seasons of distress, had completely broken down under the pressure of this wide spread calamity; whilst the other concurrent system, which, on the principle of the Poor Law, aimed at giving relief, in the most direct form, out of funds locally raised, had succeeded to the extent to which it had been tried. The works were, therefore, brought to a close in the manner which has been already described: and it was determined to complete the system of relief by the distribution of food, to give it legal validity, and to place it more decidedly on the basis of the Poor Law. This was done by the passing of the Act 10 Vict. c. 7. A Relief Committee, composed of the magistrates, one clergyman of each persuasion, the Poor Law guardian, and the three highest rate-payers, was constituted in each electoral division\*, the unit of Irish Poor Law statistics. A Finance Committee, consisting of four gentlemen, carefully selected for their weight of character and knowledge of business, was formed to control the expenditure in each union. Inspecting Officers were appointed, most of whom had been trained under the Board of Works and Sir R. Routh; and a Commission sitting in Dublin, of which Sir J. Burgoyne was the head, and the Poor Law Commissioner was one of the members, superintended the whole system. The expense was to be defrayed by payments made by the guardians out of the produce of the rates; and when this fund was insufficient, as it always proved to be, it was reinforced by loans, to be repaid by rates subsequently levied. Free grants were also made in aid of the rates in those unions in which the number of destitute poor was largest, compared with the means of relieving them, and when private subscriptions were raised, donations were made to an equal amount.

The check principally relied on, therefore, was, that the expenditure should be conducted either immediately or proximately out of the produce of the rates. No loan was to be made to any Board of Guardians until the Inspecting Officer had certified that they had passed a resolution to make the rate upon which it was to be secured, and that, to the best of his belief, they were proceeding with all possible despatch to make and levy such rate. This principle, although still imperfectly applied, and consequently irregular in its action, exercised a pervading influence over the working of this system of relief. In forming the lists of persons to be relieved, and making their demands upon the

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\* Two electoral divisions were sometimes united under one Relief Committee, but the accounts of each electoral division were kept separate.

Commissioners, few committees altogether rejected the idea that it was their own money which they were spending; and in some districts the farmer rate-payers assembled, and insisted on large numbers of persons being struck off the lists, who they knew were not entitled to relief. The tests applied to the actual recipients of relief were, that the personal attendance of all parties requiring relief was insisted on, exceptions being made in favour of the sick, impotent, and children under nine years of age, and that the relief was directed to be given only in the shape of cooked food, distributed in portions declared by the best medical authorities to be sufficient to maintain health and strength. The 'cooked food test'\* was found particularly efficacious in preventing abuse; and the enforcement of it in some parts of the country cost a severe struggle. Undressed meal might be converted into cash by those who did not require it as food, and even the most destitute often disposed of it for tea, tobacco, or spirits; but stirabout, which becomes sour by keeping, has no value in the market, and persons were therefore not likely to apply for it, who did not want it for their own consumption. Attempts were made to apply the labour test to this system of relief; but, besides the practical difficulty of want of tools and proper superintendence, the Commissioners considered that, owing to the absence of any adequate motive, it would 'lead to a want of exertion on the part of the men which would perhaps be more demoralising than relief without any work.' It was therefore left to the Relief Committees in large towns and other situations favourable to such a mode of proceeding, to take their own course upon it; and the result was that some light kinds of labour, such as cleaning the streets and whitewashing the cabins, were exacted by a few of the more zealous and active committees. Relief in aid of wages was strenuously insisted on by many of the Relief Committees, and was steadily and successfully resisted by the Commission; but it was not considered right, in the administration of a temporary measure, to require the surrender of the land held by the applicant, provided he was proved to be at the time in a state of destitution.

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\* The ration consisted of one pound of biscuit, meal, or flour; or one quart of soup thickened with meal, with a quarter ration of bread, biscuit, or meal. When bread was issued, one pound and a half was allowed. It was found by experience that the best form in which cooked food could be given was 'stirabout,' made of Indian meal and rice steamed, which was sufficiently solid to be easily carried away by the recipients. The pound ration thus prepared, swelled by the absorption of water to three or four pounds.

This system reached its highest point in the month of July 1847, when out of 2049 electoral divisions, into which Ireland is divided, 1826 had been brought under the operation of the Act, and 3,020,712 persons received separate rations, of whom 2,265,534 were adults, and 755,178 were children. This multitude was again gradually and peaceably thrown on its own resources at the season of harvest, when new and abundant supplies of food became available, and the demand for labour was at its highest amount; relief was discontinued to fifty-five unions on the 15th August, and the issues to the remaining unions entirely ceased on the 12th September. The latest date allowed by the Act for advances to be made, was the 1st October.

This was the second occasion on which upwards of three millions of people had been fed 'out of the hands of the magistrate,' but this time it was effectual. The Relief Works had been crowded with persons who had other means of subsistence, to the exclusion of the really destitute; but a ration of cooked food proved less attractive than full money wages, and room was thus made for the helpless portion of the community. The famine was stayed. The 'affecting and heart-rending crowds of destitutes'\* disappeared from the streets; the cadaverous, hunger-stricken countenances of the people gave place to looks of health; deaths from starvation ceased; and cattle-stealing, plundering provisions, and other crimes prompted by want of food, were diminished by half in the course of a single month. The Commission closed amidst general applause, and 'Resolutions were received from many hundreds of the committees praising the conduct of the inspecting officers, and frankly and honourably expressing their gratitude to Government and the Legislature for the effective means afforded them for carrying out this benevolent operation.'† This enterprise was in truth the grandest attempt ever made to grapple with famine over a whole country.‡ Organised armies, amounting altogether to some hundreds of thousands, had been rationed before; but neither ancient nor modern history can furnish a parallel to the fact that upwards of three millions of persons were fed every day in the neighbourhood of their own homes, by administrative arrangements emanating from and controlled by one central office.

The expense was moderate compared with the magnitude of

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\* Report from Count Strzelecki to the British Relief Association.

† Seventh and last Monthly Report of the Relief Commissioners.

‡ Letter from Sir John Burgoyne, quoted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the House of Commons.

the object. The amount at which it was originally estimated by the Commissioners was 3,000,000*l.*; the sum for which Parliament was asked to provide was 2,200,000*l.*, and the sum actually expended was 1,557,212*l.*, of which 146,631*l.* was paid to the Commissariat for meal supplied to the Relief Committees from the Government Depôts. The price of meal fortunately fell more than one-fifth during the progress of these operations, or from 2½*d.* a ration to less than 2*d.*, including all expenses of establishment.

The Finance Committees, which were selected bodies, consisting of from two to four gentlemen in each union, 'with rare exceptions acted with zeal and intelligence.'\* The Relief Committees, a miscellaneous body composed of the foremost persons in each petty district, whoever they might be, showed, as was to be expected, every variety of good and bad conduct. In some cases the three highest rate-payers could not read, and even themselves established claims to be placed on the list of destitute for daily rations. It is a fact very honourable to Ireland, that among upwards of 2000 local bodies to whom advances were made under this Act, there is not one to which, so far as the Government is informed, any suspicion of embezzlement attaches.

In order to check the progress of the fever, which, as usual, followed in the train of famine, the Act 10 Vict. c. 22. was passed, by which the Relief Committees were empowered to attend to the proper burial of the dead, to provide temporary hospitals, to clear away nuisances, and to ventilate and cleanse cabins, the necessary funds being advanced by the Government in the same manner as the advances for providing food. These sanitary arrangements were extensively acted upon and at moderate expense. On the 17th August 326 hospitals and dispensaries had been authorised, with accommodation for more than 23,000 patients, with medical officers, nurses, ward-maids, &c. The additional expense incurred under this act, was 119,055*l.*, the whole of which was made a free grant to the unions, in aid of rates.

The state of the finances of some of the unions was a source of deep anxiety through the winter and spring of 1846-7. Rates were not collected sufficient to defray the current expenses of the workhouses of these unions, and the guardians threatened to turn the inmates into the street, if assistance were not given from the public purse. The dilemma was a painful and perplexing one. There was no reason to doubt the readiness of

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\* Third Report of the Relief Commission.

some of the persons who held this language to put their threat into execution ; while to admit the claim might bring upon the Government the greater number of the workhouses in addition to the whole of the outdoor relief ; in other words, would transfer to national funds a burden intended by law to be local, and not likely to be administered with economy on any other footing. Important aid was, however, given. Large supplies of clothing were collected from the stores of the army and navy, and sent to Ireland for the use of the workhouses. Small sums of money, amounting in the aggregate to 23,503*l.*, were lent from time to time with a sparing hand to assist the guardians in providing food and clothing in the most pressing and necessitous cases ; 4479*l.* was expended in providing proper medical inspection and superintendence in localities in which great sickness prevailed ; and 60,000*l.* was advanced for the enlargement of the workhouses, principally by the erection of fever-wards.

The improvement of the Fisheries on the western coast of Ireland has always been an object much pressed upon the Government. In order to give the fishermen a motive for exertion, and set them an example of improved modes of preparing the fish for sale, experienced curers were obtained from the Fishery Board in Scotland ; six stations were formed, at which fish are purchased at a fair market-price, cured, and sold again for consumption to the highest bidder ; and supplies of salt and tackle were provided for sale to the fishermen. This was done without any expense to the public, by means of a sum of 5000*l.* placed at the disposal of the Government out of the balance of the subscription for the relief of Irish distress in 1822.

The plan of making small loans to fishermen to enable them to equip themselves for their trade was not resorted to, because experience had proved that the fishermen are induced by it to rely upon others, instead of themselves, and that they acquire habits of chicanery and bad faith in their prolonged struggle to evade the payment of the loans. Sir J. Burgoyne had authority given him by the British Relief Association, to apply 500*l.* to this object, and he induced the Relief Committee of the Society of Friends to take up the same cause. ‘ I have made,’ he states, ‘ many inquiries for the purpose, but I have always made it a point that there should be a decided prospect of any advances being repaid, and here the matter hangs. The officers all report that they doubt being able to get the money back ; and I think it so necessary to be firm on this point, that I have not made use of a penny of the 500*l.*, and have recommended the Friends to reserve their funds also for a better mode of expending them.’ Since then, the Society of Friends, who are



able to give a more particular attention to such subjects than it is possible for the Government to do, have done much good by assisting poor fishermen to redeem their nets and other implements of their trade, which they had pawned during the season of extreme distress; and these excellent people have also adopted an admirable plan of providing good boats and all requisite gear, with a competent person to instruct the native fishermen, who are formed into companies or partnerships and work out the value of the boats, &c., of which they may then become the owners. A large supply of seamen's jackets and trousers, obtained from the Admiralty, was delivered to the Society of Friends, for distribution among the poor fishermen on the west of Ireland.

From the first failure of the potato crop in 1845, the subject of providing seed was repeatedly considered, and the conclusion invariably arrived at was, that the moment it came to be understood that the Government had taken upon itself the responsibility of this delicate and peculiar branch of rural economy, the painful exertions made by private individuals in every part of Ireland to reserve a stock of seed would be relaxed, and the quantity consumed as food in consequence of the interference of the Government, would greatly exceed the quantity supplied by means of that interference. The Government therefore never undertook to supply any kind of seed already in extensive use; but Holland was had recourse to for flax and rye seed, Scotland for the hardy description of barley called *bere*, and England and the neighbouring continental countries for turnip, carrot, beet-root, and other vegetable and green-crop seeds; all of which were sent to Ireland for sale at low prices, and latterly for gratuitous distribution. More than thirteen tons of turnip seed, belonging to the Government and the British Relief Association, were distributed in the county of Mayo alone\*, besides 125 hogsheads of flax seed, by which means, in addition to the present supply of food obtained, a foundation was laid for an improved system of agriculture by a rotation of crops. One of the remedial measures proposed by the Government at the commencement of the parliamentary session of 1847, was to

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\* The small holders in the barony of Erris, in this county, declined at first to accept the seed which was offered them, saying that if they sowed it, the crops would be seized by their landlords. This was not believed at the time in England, but it has, nevertheless, turned out perfectly true. This barony, of which Belmullet is the principal place, is the darkest corner of Ireland. In some instances broken landowners and their families were receiving rations, while their tenants were starving.

make loans to landed proprietors to the aggregate amount of 50,000*l.* to enable them to provide their tenants with seed, which loans were to have been repaid out of the produce of the crops raised from the seed; but nobody availed himself of this boon. The objections which exist to the Government leaving its province to interfere in the ordinary business of private life, were in nothing more clearly demonstrated than in what took place in reference to this subject. The accidental detention, by contrary winds, of a vessel laden with rye and bere seed, called forth expressions of anger and disappointment from various parts of the west and south of Ireland which had depended upon this supply; and the unfounded belief that the Government had entered upon a general undertaking to provide seed-corn, largely contributed to that criminal apathy which was one of the causes of large tracts of land being left waste in 1846-7. On the other hand, it was found, when inquiries were made for vegetable seeds in the spring of 1847, that every ounce of parsnip seed in the London market had been already bought up and sent to Ireland; which is only one instance among many that might be adduced, of the reliance which may be placed on private interest and enterprise on occasions of this sort.\*

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\* The following interesting account of what took place in the county of Clare on the subject of seed, is extracted from Captain Mann's narrative:—

‘The first supply of seed sent for distribution by sale, was received on the 13th March last, up to which period the prospect of the tillage of the land being neglected, was very alarming. The seed-grain had been in most cases either partially or wholly consumed for food. Bad advice had been given, that the government or the landlords would be forced into assisting—the former to pay wages for the time while the work was going on, and the latter to provide seed, if the government would not. The supply alluded to was bere and rye. By dint of persuasion, and having it published by the Roman Catholic clergy, the quantity sent was taken and planted; and here let me add, that the most sanguine could not have anticipated the great benefit of this importation. The value of the bere, as an early crop and produce, exceeded every expectation. It was reaped and in the market the latter part of July; and, as compared with other barley, it is stated to me, thrashed out five stone to the bar, of twenty hand-sheafs, while the other only yielded three stone from the same quantity. The rye grew on bog merely burnt, and that even slightly; in some cases the heather being in bloom where the rye in the same ground was ripe. Thus hundreds of acres were cultivated that might have lain waste; and as the rye-mal brought by the “Sisters” from St. Petersburg to this depôt, and issued as rations, became, after some opposition, popular with the poor, it does not require any remark to show

There is still another measure which does not the less deserve to be mentioned because it ended in failure. The Act 9 & 10 Vict. c. 109., passed at the close of the session of 1846, had appropriated a sum of 50,000*l.* to be granted in aid of public works of acknowledged utility, one-half of the expense of which was to be provided for by a loan, and another portion was to be

the value and importance of this article, when considered as an auxiliary substitute for the potato food; and the more so because it can be grown on inferior land here, and not like the Indian corn-meal, which we are forced to look to other countries for.

'The supply of green crop and oat-seed by her Majesty's ship "Dragon" was received here the 12th April last. Some few landlords purchased of the first, and supplied their tenantry, but of the latter but little was purchased at that time. The feeling still existed that the government or the landlords would be forced into providing seed, and assisting the tillage; but when that vessel sailed, and they became convinced to the contrary, the most pressing and even distressing applications were made to me by the people to procure a supply of any seed; the fact being clear that grain-seed (oats and barley) was not to be procured. Most fortunately, in a few days after, the hired steamer "Doris" arrived with her cargo of oat-seed, the greater part of which was freely purchased, and a vast quantity of land immediately tilled. A sudden and favourable reaction took place, all appearing anxious to raise something, and not let the land run to waste. Turnip-seed was imported by dealers to a very large amount; and those who could bought and sowed it. Subsequently a small quantity was sent to me for gratuitous distribution. Lists of the parties who received it, and the quantities allotted, are herewith annexed; and to this were added some small pamphlets given to me by Lord Robert Clinton, my object being to assist the poor, and spread the benefit over the greatest possible extent.

'I have now the pleasure to state, that instead of this part of the country being as described in the first series, with respect to green crops, the turnip particularly has become a general produce with even the poorest. Quantities are daily exposed for sale in the markets, and with a mixture of Indian corn-meal, rice, or flour, it is used as a substitute for bread. Emulation has been excited; and a few days since I was invited to view an exhibition at Colonel Vandeleur's, of the following:—

	Stone.	Lbs.			Lbs.
3 Swedish turnips	- 4	0 weight.	Heaviest of the three	-	20
3 White ditto	- 3	11 "	Ditto	- -	20
3 Mangel wurzel	- 3	8 "	Ditto	- -	18

Beside white carrots, &c. Experiments have been tried with the potato set in drills very successfully; and I do trust that improvement will make further progress under the system of instruction which it is said will be adopted.'

contributed in cash by the persons principally interested in the works. No application was made to participate in the advantage of this arrangement, and the 50,000*l.* was therefore transferred in the next session of Parliament to the erection of Fishery Piers and other useful objects.

The qualities displayed by the officers intrusted with the conduct of these great operations, will always be regarded as a bright spot in the cloud which hangs over this disastrous period. The nation had never been better served. The administrative ability which enabled Sir R. Routh to dispose, without hurry or confusion, of masses of business which to most persons would have been overwhelming; the stoutness of heart with which Colonel Jones commanded, and ultimately disbanded his army of 740,000 able-bodied Irishmen; the admirable sagacity displayed by Sir J. Burgoyne in coming to a safe practical decision upon perplexed social questions, then perhaps for the first time presented to him; the remarkable financial ability of Mr. Bromley, the accountant to the Relief Commission; the cordial co-operation of Admiral Sir Hugh Pigot and his able secretary, Mr. Nicholls, and the valuable assistance rendered in many different ways by Colonel Mac Gregor, the head of the constabulary force, proved that, however great the crisis might be, the persons in chief trust were equal to it.\* But the most gratifying feature of all, was the zeal and unanimity with which the large body of Officers employed devoted themselves to this labour of love†, although they had been suddenly brought together for this particular occasion from many different branches of the public service, or from the retirement of private life. It may truly be said of them, that they 'offered themselves willingly 'among the people;' and several painful casualties from the prevailing fever, and the failing health of others, showed that the risks and hardships attending this service were of no ordinary

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\* The readiness with which the Bank of Ireland, and the Provincial, National, and other banks, undertook the office of Treasurer to the Finance Committees, and entered into every proposed detail and accommodation, in support of the operations of the Commissariat, the Relief Commission, and the Board of Works, is very creditable to the managers, and deserves the thanks of the public.

† All the letters and proceedings of these officers showed that their predominant feeling was an anxious desire to fulfil the benevolent mission on which they had been sent. One observed that he could bear anything but the 'careless misery of the children;' another that his heart was broken by the sobs of the women returning to their homes with a smaller quantity of food than was sufficient for the support of their families.

kind. The officers and men belonging to the numerous ships-of-war employed in the 'Relief Service,' entered with characteristic spirit upon duties which indicated in a more direct manner than ever before, that the real object of their noble profession is not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; and it was creditable to their seamanship, as well as their humanity, that the dangers and hardships attending their incessant employment on the exposed western coasts of Ireland and Scotland during the stormy months of winter, did not lead to the loss of a single vessel.\*

\* The Four Commissions employed on these operations were composed as follows:—

**The Board of Works.**

Lieut.-Col. H. D. Jones, R.E.,	Chairman.
Richard Griffith, Esq.,	Deputy Chairman.
John Radcliff, Esq.	
Wm. Thos. Mulvany, Esq.	} Commissioners.
Captain Larcom, R.E.	

**The First Relief Commission, appointed by Sir Robert Peel's Government.**

Rt. Hon. E. Lucas, Chairman (afterwards retired).  
 Com.-Gen. Sir R. I. Routh (afterwards Chairman).  
 Colonel D. McGregor.  
 Lieut.-Col. H. D. Jones, R.E.  
 Sir James Donabrain.  
 Professor Sir Robert Kane.  
 E. T. B. Twisleton, Esq.  
 Theobald McKenna, Esq.

**The Second Relief Commission, appointed by Lord John Russell's Government.**

Major.-Gen. Sir J. F. Burgoyne, K.C.B., Chairman.  
 T. N. Redington, Esq.  
 E. T. B. Twisleton, Esq.  
 Com.-Gen. Sir R. I. Routh.  
 Lieut.-Col. H. D. Jones, R.E.  
 Colonel D. McGregor.

**The Poor Law Commissioners in Ireland.**

E. T. B. Twisleton, Esq.  
 Rt. Hon. Sir W. M. Somerville, Bart.  
 T. N. Redington, Esq.

Sir Randolph Routh was in charge of the Commissariat from the commencement to the end of the measures of relief.

It is due to Mr. Redington to state that his intimate acquaintance with Ireland, and excellent judgment, have been a never-failing ground of reliance in the most difficult emergencies.

A slight reference to the exertions which had to be made for the single object of conducting and checking the expenditure, will give some idea of the magnitude and difficulty of the task which was imposed on the officers of the Crown.

In establishing a system of Relief Works, intended to bring employment to every man's door, it was impossible to avoid creating an extensive staff for the superintendence and payment of the labouring poor. Very voluminous accounts suddenly poured into the Office of Works from all parts of Ireland; and as the lives of thousands depended upon the supply of funds, it became a duty of the first importance to insure their immediate distribution over the whole surface of the country. Remittances were made to about 600 pay clerks weekly, and it was often found necessary to transfer from one to the other sums of money upon the authority of local officers, whereby an intermixture of accounts of a very intricate description took place. The weekly accounts sent to the office at Dublin exceeded 20,000, and the pay lists were more than a quarter of a million in number, the expenditure being at one time at the rate of a million a-month. To watch the distribution of such large sums would have been a gigantic task, even for a long-established and well-organised department, but for a temporary establishment, composed, for the most part, of persons with little, if any, previous knowledge of business, the duty was one of unprecedented difficulty, and it is a matter of surprise that greater irregularity was not the consequence.

In the books of the temporary Relief Commission it was found necessary to open accounts with more than 2000 bodies intrusted with the expenditure of public money; and such was the rapidity of the service, that within a period of five months, more than 19,000 estimates were received in the accountant's office, and acted upon, with a like number of accounts, which were registered for examination, and more than 17,000 letters were received and answered. The pecuniary transactions of this commission were not with public officers, but with ephemeral bodies composed of persons generally unused to business, and almost irresponsible; but the utmost good faith prevailed; and by requiring an immediate account, with vouchers, every fortnight, of the disbursement of the previous amount remitted, with the balance remaining on hand, before a further supply was sent down, the best control upon the expenditure was established, and the result has been the great saving (more than half a million) effected, while scarcely an instance of misappropriation has occurred. It has also been admitted in many parts of Ireland, that these accounts, and the instructions for

their preparation, have induced habits of business that never before existed, while at the same time they have urged the Stamp Laws into more active operation.

The prompt examination and audit of the accounts of the Board of Works, the Commissariat, and the Relief Commission, was provided for by the deputation of experienced persons from the offices in London, under whose superintendence the whole of the expenditure has been subjected to a searching local revision, and wherever any symptom of malversation has appeared, the matter has been probed to the bottom.

It has been a popular argument in Ireland, that as the calamity was an imperial one, the whole amount expended in relieving it ought to be defrayed out of the public revenue. There can be no doubt that the deplorable consequences of this great calamity extended to the empire at large, but the disease was strictly local, and the cure was to be obtained only by the application of local remedies. If England and Scotland, and great part of the north and east of Ireland had stood alone, the pressure would have been severe, but there would have been no call for assistance from national funds. The west and south of Ireland was the peccant part. The owners and holders of land in those districts had permitted or encouraged the growth of the excessive population which depended upon the precarious potato, and they alone had it in their power to restore society to a safe and healthy state. If all were interested in saving the starving people, they were far more so, because it included their own salvation from the desperate struggles of surrounding multitudes phrenzied with hunger. The economical administration of the relief could only be provided for by making it, in part at least, a local charge. In the invariable contemplation of the law, the classes represented by the rate-payers have to bear the whole burden of their own poor; the majority of the British community did so bear it throughout this year of distress; and, besides fulfilling their own duties, they placed in the hands of the minority the means of performing theirs, requiring them to repay only one-half.

A special objection has been raised to the repayment of the advances for the Relief Works, on the ground that their cost exceeds that for which they could now be constructed. The answer to this is, that these works were undertaken solely for the purpose of giving employment in a great emergency, when it was impossible for them to be executed with the same care and economy as in ordinary times\*; that the counties are there-

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\* One of the principal causes of the expense incurred, was the pressure to find work for every person in the neighbourhood of his

fore chargeable with them, not as works, but as relief; and that if they had cost either half as much, or twice as much as they did, the liability would have been the same. But when it is remembered that the expensive character of the works was in a great degree owing to the Board of Works not having received from the Presentment Sessions and the Relief Committees that assistance in keeping down the expenditure, which it was the duty of those bodies to have rendered, both by making a proper selection of the works to be undertaken, and by confining their recommendations for employment on them to those persons who were really destitute, it is a matter of surprise that any answer has been rendered necessary.

We should probably have heard less of these repayments if it had been generally known what their real amount is. The sum expended under the first Relief Works Act (9 & 10 Vict. c. 1.) was 476,000*l.*, one half of which was grant, and the other half is to be repaid by twenty half-yearly instalments, amounting on an average, including interest, to about 12,500*l.* each.\* The expenditure under the second act (9 & 10 Vict. c. 107.) was about 4,850,000*l.*, half of which was remitted, and the other half is repayable by similar instalments of 145,500*l.* each, including interest. The annual addition made to the rates by the repayments under the two acts relating to the Relief Works is therefore about 316,000*l.*†; while, by an act passed on the 28th of August, 1846, the rates were relieved from an annual payment of 192,000*l.*, being the remaining half of the expense of the constabulary, the other half of which was already defrayed out of national funds. The additional charge upon the rates, therefore, amounts only to 124,000*l.* a-year for ten years, or 1,240,000*l.* in all. The sum advanced under the 9 & 10 Vict. c. 2., on the security of grand jury presentments, was 130,000*l.*, which will have to be repaid in various periods, extending from three to ten years; but the expenditure under this act was merely in anticipation of the usual repairs of the

own home, which added greatly to the number of the works, and to the proportion of them left unfinished.

\* The first instalments due under the 9 and 10 Vict. c. 1 & 2. have been already paid.

† Viz., 25,000*l.*, being the aggregate of the two half-yearly instalments under the 9 and 10 Vict. c. 1; and 291,000*l.*, the same under the 9 and 10 Vict., c. 107.

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Total 316,000*l.*

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public roads, the cost of which is, in ordinary years, raised within the year without any advance. Lastly, the sum expended in the distribution of food under the 10 Vict. c. 7., and in medical relief under the 10 Vict. c. 22., was 1,676,268*l.*, of which 961,739*l.* is to be repaid, and the remaining 714,529*l.* is a free grant. The first-mentioned act included a fund for making grants as well as loans, and the demands for repayment have been adjusted as nearly as possible according to the circumstances of each district. In some of the western unions, where the amount of destitution bears the largest proportion to the means of the rate-payers, and, owing to the extent to which the potato was formerly cultivated, a painful period of transition has yet to be endured, only a small part of the sum expended is required to be repaid \*; while in other unions where the return of low prices has restored society to its ordinary state, grants have been confined to those cases in which the expenditure has exceeded a rating of three shillings in the pound on the valuation.

All the claims of the Exchequer, arising out of the relief operations of 1846 and 1847, have now been described, and it must be borne in mind that the several localities received full value for what they have to pay. They were saved from a prolonged and horrible state of famine, pestilence, and anarchy, which was the main consideration; and they had, besides, the incidental advantage of the labour bestowed upon the roads and other public works, especially in the poor and wild districts of the west, where lines of road have been opened, with the aid of the relief grants and loans, which, although much wanted, could not have been undertaken for years to come without such assistance. The rest of the expenditure, including the large donations made to relief committees previously to the passing of the

\* The proportions in which the expenditure was made a local or general charge in the following unions, were—

		Loan to be repaid.	Grant in aid of rates.
County of Mayo	{ Ballina - -	£13,716 - -	£43,610
	{ Ballinrobe - -	12,183 - -	27,997
	{ Castlebar - -	7,282 - -	19,313
	{ Swineford - -	6,620 - -	31,797
	{ Westport - -	5,624 - -	37,993
" Galway	{ Clifden - -	3,228 - -	8,868
	{ Gort - -	7,663 - -	18,475
" Clare	{ Scariff - -	6,406 - -	10,943
" Cork	{ Bantry - -	6,079 - -	12,294
	{ Skibbereen - -	13,451 - -	21,627
" Kerry	{ Kenmare - -	3,359 - -	10,956

Act 10 Vict. c. 7., the cost of the staff of the Board of Works and of the Relief Commission, the Commissariat Staff, and the heavy naval expenditure, has been defrayed out of the public purse, without any demand for repayment.

Hitherto our narrative has been confined to what was done by the Government, but the voluntary exertions of private individuals contributed their full share towards this unprecedented act of public charity. The Society of Friends were, as usual, first in the field of benevolent action. A subscription was opened by them in London in November 1846; members of the Society were sent on a deputation to Ireland, and those who resided there aided by their personal exertions and local knowledge. On the 6th January, 1847, a committee, of which Mr. Jones Loyd was chairman, and Mr. Thomas Baring and Baron Rothschild were members, invited contributions under the designation of the 'British Association for the Relief of extreme Distress in Ireland and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.' On the 13th of January, 1847, a Queen's letter was issued with the same object, and the 24th of March was appointed, by proclamation, for a General Fast and Humiliation before Almighty God, 'in behalf of ourselves and of our brethren, who, in many parts of this United Kingdom, are suffering extreme famine and sickness.' A painful and tender sympathy pervaded every class of society. From the Queen on her throne to the convicts in the hulks, expenses were curtailed, and privations were endured, in order to swell the Irish subscription. The fast was observed with unusual solemnity, and the London season of this year was remarkable for the absence of gaiety and expensive entertainments. The vibration was felt through every nerve of the British empire. The remotest stations in India, the most recent settlements in the backwoods of Canada, contributed their quota, and 652*l.* was subscribed by the British residing in the city of Mexico, at a time when their trade was cut off, and their personal safety compromised by the war with the United States. The sum collected under the Queen's letter was 171,533*l.* The amount separately contributed through the British Association was 263,251*l.*\*; and this ag-

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\* The following are some of the most remarkable contributions:—

			£	s.	d.
Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen	-	-	*2000	0	0
H. R. H. Prince Albert	-	-	500	0	0

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\* Her Majesty also contributed 500*l.* to the 'British Ladies Clothing Fund.'

gregate amount of 434,784*l.* was divided in the proportion of five sixths to Ireland, and one sixth to Scotland. But besides

	£	s.	d.
Her Majesty the Queen Dowager - - - - -	1000	0	0
His Majesty the King of Hanover, as Duke of Cumberland and Chancellor of the University of Dublin - - - - -	1000	0	0
His Imperial Highness the Sultan - - - - -	1000	0	0
The East India Company - - - - -	1000	0	0
The Corporation of the City of London - - - - -	1000	0	0
The Bank of England - - - - -	1000	0	0
The Duke of Devonshire - - - - -	1000	0	0
The Worshipful Company of Grocers - - - - -	1000	0	0
Messrs. Jones, Lloyd, and Co. - - - - -	1000	0	0
„ Rothschild and Co. - - - - -	1000	0	0
„ Baring Brothers and Co. - - - - -	1000	0	0
„ Truman, Hanbury, and Co. (including 50 <i>l.</i> from their clerks, and 8 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> from their workmen) - - - - -	1163	10	0
„ Smith, Payne, and Smiths - - - - -	1000	0	0
„ Overend, Gurney, and Co. - - - - -	1000	0	0
An English Friend, two Donations - - - - -	1004	0	0
An Irish Landlord, for Skibbereen - - - - -	1000	0	0
Manchester and Salford Relief Committee - - - - -	778 <i>s.</i>	0	0
Newcastle and Gateshead ditto - - - - -	3902	0	0
Hull ditto - - - - -	3800	0	0
Leeds ditto - - - - -	2500	0	0
Huddersfield ditto - - - - -	2103	0	0
Wolverhampton ditto - - - - -	1838	0	0
York ditto - - - - -	1700	0	0
Cambridge University and Town, including 617 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> from Trinity College, and 500 <i>l.</i> collected at the Baptist Chapel in St. Andrew Street - - - - -	2706	0	0
Oxford University and City - - - - -	1770	0	0
Proceeds of a Ball at Florence given by the Prince de Demidoff at San Donato, besides 500 <i>l.</i> from the Florence Relief Committee, and 9 <i>l.</i> 13 <i>s.</i> 9 <i>d.</i> from the English servants at Florence - - - - -	891	17	2
St. Petersburg - - - - -	2644	0	0
Constantinople - - - - -	620	0	0
Amsterdam: collections in the English Church - - - - -	561	0	0
Denmark; partly collected by Parish Priests in the provinces - - - - -	504	0	0
Malta and Gozo - - - - -	720	0	0
Remittances from British Guiana, the result of public subscription - - - - -	3000	0	0
Nova Scotia, including a vote of 2250 <i>l.</i> by the House of Assembly - - - - -	2915	0	0
Barbadoes Relief Committee - - - - -	2575	0	0

this great stream of charity, there were a thousand other channels which it is impossible to trace, and of the aggregate result of

						£	s.	d.
Jamaica, including a vote of 525 <i>l.</i> by the House of								
Assembly	-	-	-	-	-	1537	0	0
Trinidad	-	-	-	-	-	1350	0	0
Newfoundland	-	-	-	-	-	868	0	0
St. Lucia	-	-	-	-	-	614	0	0
Grenada	-	-	-	-	-	564	0	0
St. Christopher; vote of the Legislature of the Island						505	0	0
Bermuda; vote of the House of Assembly	-	-	-	-	-	500	0	0
Hobart Town	-	-	-	-	-	500	0	0
Bombay	-	-	-	-	-	9000	0	0
Madras	-	-	-	-	-	2150	0	0
Remittance from the Mauritius, including 11 <i>l.</i> 16 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>								
from the Seychelles Islands, and 16 <i>l.</i> 7 <i>s.</i> from								
Rodrigues, and in addition to 221 <i>l.</i> 13 <i>s.</i> collected by								
the Vicar Apostolic, and sent direct to Ireland. (The								
amount subscribed at the Seychelles Islands, and at								
Rodrigues, is very remarkable, when the poverty								
of their inhabitants is considered)						3020	0	0
Collection at Basseterre, St. Kitts, from Negroes belong-								
ing to the Congregation under the charge of the								
Moravian Missionaries, per Rev. G. W. Westerley						15	17	10
Officers and crew of her Majesty's ship 'Hibernia'						167	17	11
Contribution by the Governor, Commissioner, Lieuten-								
ant-Governor, and officers of Greenwich Hospital,								
being the sum allowed them for a festival dinner in								
commemoration of the battle off Cape St. Vincent						40	0	0
The 2d Regiment of Life Guards						156	4	6
A diamond cross from a lady (realised)						42	0	0
Workmen employed by Sir John Guest at the Dowlas								
Iron Works						176	17	10
Metropolitan Police						161	0	0
Proceeds of two amateur performances at the St. James's								
Theatre						1413	0	0
Collected on board the British and North American								
Royal Mail steamer 'Hibernia,' for Ireland						51	12	8
Wesleyan Methodists; part of the first distribution of								
collections in various chapels						5000	0	0
Members of the London Daily Press, chiefly Reporters								
and Compositors, in addition to other contributions						88	18	0
Proprietors of the 'Morning Herald' and 'Daily News,'								
each						100	0	0
'Punch'						50	0	0

Many of the smaller subscriptions, such as 800*l.* from the town of Bridgewater, and 747*l.* from the Bahamas, are more remarkable in proportion to the means of the contributors, than many of those which have been mentioned.

which no estimate can be formed. There were separate committees which raised and sent over large sums of money. There were ladies' associations without end to collect small weekly subscriptions and make up clothes to send to Ireland. The opera, the fancy bazaar, the fashionable ball rendered tribute; and, above all, there were the private efforts of numberless individuals, each acting for himself and choosing his own almoners, of which no record exists except on High. Upon application being made to the managers of the Provincial Bank of Ireland to permit English charitable remittances to pass without the usual charge, it turned out that they had been in the habit of doing so for a considerable time past, and that the amount sent through that one channel, in the six months ending on the 4th March, 1847, exceeded 20,000*l*. In the contemplation of this great calamity, the people of the United States of America forgot their separate nationality, and remembered only that they were sprung from the same origin as ourselves. The sympathy there was earnest and universal, and the manifestations of it most generous and munificent. The contributions from this land of plenty consisted principally of Indian corn, and other kinds of provisions, and the cargoes were, for the most part, consigned to the Society of Friends, whose quiet, patient, practical exertions commanded universal confidence. The freight and charges on the supplies of food and clothing sent to Ireland by charitable societies and individuals, as well from the United States and Canada on the one side, as from England on the other, were paid by the Government, to an amount exceeding 50,000*l*.\*:

The officers and men of the Coast Guard raised a fund amounting to 429*l*., which was expended by the members of the force in Ireland in giving relief in the neighbourhood of their respective stations. From the commencement of the distress the Coast Guard has been distinguished for its active benevolence.

The National Club in London collected a sum of 17,930*l*., 1000*l*. of which was from various congregations at Brighton, 500*l*. from an anonymous contributor, and 500*l*. from the Wesleyan Irish and Scotch Relief Committee. This fund was intrusted for distribution to the clergy of the Established Church in Ireland, acting under a committee appointed for each diocese, headed by the bishop.

The amount collected by the London Committee of the Society of Friends was 43,026*l*., nearly the whole of which was disbursed through the Dublin Friends' Committee.

\* Two United States ships of war, the 'Jamestown' and 'Macedonian,' were manned by volunteers, and sent to Ireland and Scotland with the following charitable supplies, for which no claim for freight was made. These two cargoes will serve as a specimen of the rest.

all custom dues were remitted, and the meal and other articles were to a great extent taken charge of by the officers of the

‘ JAMESTOWN.

Corn and Grain.		qrs.	bshl.			qrs.	bshl.
Wheat	-	- 4	0	Peas	- - -	- 30	0
Barley	-	- 3	4	Beans	- - -	- 279	3
Oats	-	- 2	4	Indian Corn or Maize		339	2
Rye	-	- 9	2				

Meal and Flour.		ewt.	qrs.	bshl.
Wheat Meal or Flour	- -	96	1	0
Barleym meal	}	-	-	-
Oatmeal				
Indian Corn Meal	- -	4229	3	0

		ewt.	qrs.	bshl.			ewt.	qrs.	bshl.
Rice	-	154	1	4	Pork	-	707	0	16
Bread and Biscuit		1049	3	21	Hams	-	291	3	4
Potatoes	-	61	1	1	Fish	-	4	0	0
Apples, dried	-	0	0	6	Clothing	10 cases, 18 barrels.			

‘ MACEDONIAN.’

Landed in Ireland.

Indian Corn Meal, 5324 barrels at 196 lbs.	
each - - - - -	1,043,504 pounds.
Rice, equal to 217 tierces, at 6 cwt. each -	145,824
Beans, 6 tierces of 4 cwt., 66 bbls. of	
196 lbs., 38 bags of 100 lbs. - -	19,424
Peas, 53 bbls. of 196 lbs., 100 bags of	
100 lbs. each - - - - -	11,388
Indian Corn, 38 bags of 100 lbs. - -	3800
Wheat, 1 bag - - - - -	100
Salt Pork, 1 barrel - - - - -	200

Pounds 1,224,240 = 546 $\frac{1}{2}$  $\frac{1}{4}$  $\frac{1}{8}$  tons.

Besides 100 barrels Indian Corn Meal and three packages of Clothing, landed as a private consignment to the Rev. Mr. Taylor.  
Clothing, 13 boxes, 3 bales, 3 barrels - - - 19 packages.

Landed in Scotland.

1 package clothing,	133 bags oats,
1 barrel beef,	2 barrels beans, and
143 barrels meal,	8 chests of tea.

Of which the Glasgow Section received —

1 package clothing,	133 bags oats, and
1 barrel beef,	8 chests tea.
37 barrels meal.	

Commissariat, and held by them at the disposal of the parties to whom they had been consigned for distribution; by which means the necessary harmony was preserved between the operations of the Government and those of the private associations, and the bounty of the subscribers reached the destitute persons for whom it was intended, with as small a deduction as possible for incidental expenses. Thus, when the British Association was desirous of giving the cultivators on the Western Coast of Ireland an opportunity of purchasing seed at a low market price at the close of the sowing season of 1847, five large steamers were collected by the Government, which were loaded in a remarkably short space of time, with oats and other seed provided by the Association, and were sent forth, each to its appointed section of the Western Coast, so that every harbour accessible to a steamer, from Kinsale to Londonderry, was looked into, and what remained unsold was left in the Government depôts for subsequent sale or gratuitous distribution. On the other hand, the Government received much assistance and support from the operations of these benevolent societies, and they were especially useful in bridging over the fearful interval between the system of relief by work and relief by food. Several gentlemen, with a noble self-devotion, volunteered their services to the British Association, among whom Lord Robert Clinton, Lord James Butler, Count Strzelecki, and Mr. Higgins, were distinguished by their zeal and ability, and by the fortitude with which, for months together, they endured the pain and risk attending the immediate contact with hunger and disease.

A large committee, with the Marquis of Kildare at its head, was formed in Dublin under the name of the 'General Central Relief Committee for all Ireland,' the contributions received by which amounted to upwards of 50,000*l.*, independently of 10,000*l.* in cash and an equal value in food, intrusted to this committee from the sum raised by the Queen's Letter. British North America contributed through this medium the munificent sum of 12,463*l.*, including 5873*l.* from Montreal; 1571*l.* from Quebec; and 3472*l.* from Toronto. The United States gave 5852*l.*, of which 3199*l.* was from New Orleans. British India, 5674*l.*; the Cape of Good Hope, 2900*l.*; Australia, 2282*l.*; South America, 772*l.*; the Military, 386*l.*; Scotland, France,

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The Edinburgh Section received —

100 barrels meal; and 6 barrels meal and 2 barrels beans were delivered to Mr. Mathieson, of Stirling, as instructed by the manifest.

Germany, Italy, Belgium, Gibraltar, the Channel Islands, West Indies, the Ionian Islands, &c., 2168*l*.; Ireland, independently of local subscriptions, which were very considerable, 9888*l*.; and England, over and above the 20,000*l*. remitted from the produce of the Queen's Letter, 8886*l*.

Subscriptions were received to a smaller amount, but from an earlier period of the distress, by another Committee established in Dublin under the name of the Irish Relief Association for the Destitute Peasantry, which was announced to be a re-organisation of the association formed during the period of famine in the west of Ireland in 1831. The list of patrons commenced with the names of the Archbishop of Dublin and the Duke of Manchester, and, independently of some cargoes of corn, flour, &c., from Canada and the United States, the funds placed at their disposal amounted to nearly 42,000*l*., among the contributions to which, the following were conspicuous:—England, 17,782*l*.; Ireland, 6151*l*.; France, 1390*l*.; Italy, including 1481*l*. from Rome, 2708*l*.; British North America, 2821*l*. (1165*l*. of this being from Quebec); United States, 847*l*.; India, 5947*l*., of which the large proportion of 4981*l*. was from Madras; West Indies, 1043*l*.; Australia, 2314*l*.; and from the officers and men of various regiments, and the pensioners and constabulary, 508*l*.

But the most considerable of the Dublin Charitable Committees, was that composed of members of the Society of Friends, of which Mr. Joseph Bewley and Mr. Jonathan Pim were the secretaries. The contributions placed at their disposal since the 3d of December, 1846, in money and provisions, have been to the amount of upwards of 168,000*l*., of which no less than 108,651*l*. is the estimated value of provisions (7935 tons) consigned to them from the United States of America. Of the subscriptions in money, 35,393*l*. was paid in by the London Committee of the Society of Friends: 8494*l*. by Members of the Society and others in Dublin; and the large sum of 15,567*l*. by persons residing in the United States. The provisions received from America were as follows:—

		Tons		Estimated Value.		
				£	s.	d.
From New York	-	4496	-	58,299	15	0
„ Philadelphia	-	1870 $\frac{1}{4}$	-	24,948	18	0
„ New Orleans	-	349	-	7538	5	0
„ Newark, N. I.	-	316 $\frac{3}{4}$	-	5141	0	0
„ Baltimore	-	262 $\frac{1}{2}$	-	3913	10	0
„ Richmond, V.	-	252 $\frac{1}{2}$	-	3486	15	0
„ Charleston	-	169	-	2362	0	0



	Tons.	Estimated Value.
		£   s.   d.
From Alexandria, V.	- 102 -	1422 10 0
„ Sundry other Ports,		
United States, America	117 -	1518 7 10

And in addition to these large donations of money and food, consignments of clothing were received from England and America, to the estimated value of from 5000*l.* to 10,000*l.*

The ladies of Ireland exerted themselves with characteristic zeal and benevolence, to alleviate the sufferings of their country-people, and to promote their moral advancement, by awakening and encouraging a spirit of independent exertion, and fostering habits of industry and self-reliance. The ‘Ladies’ Relief Association for Ireland,’ in the management of which the Honourable Mrs. Newcome takes the principal part, and the objects of which are ‘to encourage industry among the female peasantry of Ireland, to contribute towards providing nourishment for the sick, and to procure clothing for the destitute,’ raised 11,465*l.* previously to the 1st of August 1847, of which 3043*l.* was derived from the proceeds of a Fancy Bazaar in London; and of this sum, 2500*l.* was appropriated to the relief of families whose husbands or fathers ‘have been removed while performing their ‘painfully laborious duties.’ The ‘Ladies’ Industrial Society ‘for the encouragement of remunerative labour among the ‘peasantry of Ireland,’ of which Mrs. Lloyd is the active promoter, more particularly aims at encouraging the manufacture of those articles which are likely to find a ready sale in the trade; for which purpose, instruction is given in the best and most practicable descriptions of remunerative labour; patterns, models, and implements are furnished; and the means of sale are provided for the produce, through the intervention of a mercantile agency in Dublin. Numerous benevolent persons adopted the same course in various parts of Ireland, sometimes in connexion with these societies, and sometimes using their own means, with such aid as was sent to them by their private friends. Mr. Gildea, the rector of Newport, and the ladies of his family, revived the manufacture of coarse linen at that place, and they have employed between 500 and 600 females since the beginning of January, in the execution of orders sent them by charitable persons.\* The ladies of the Presentation

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\* Nearly 3000*l.* was remitted to Mr. Gildea in advance, in sums of from 10*s.* to 20*l.*, for linens to be afterwards furnished. He might have received much larger sums, and he found great difficulty in stopping the outpouring of sympathy and support that came upon

Convent at Galway gave every day a good meal of porridge to upwards of 600 starving children who attended their schools. The ladies of the Owenmore Relief Committee raised and expended in various works of charity 2427*l.*, exclusive of grants of the British Association and of the Government, to five parochial kitchens superintended by them. Want of space alone prevents us from alluding to many other similar instances.

In the autumn and winter of 1846 efforts were made to induce the Government to take an active part in assisting emigration by an apportionment of the expense of passage and outfit between the public, the landlords, and the emigrants themselves; but, on a full consideration of the subject, it appeared that the emigration about to take place in the ensuing season to Canada and the United States, without any assistance from the public, was likely to be quite as large as those countries could properly absorb, and that the consequence of the interference of the Government would be that the movement would be carried beyond those limits which were consistent with safety, and that a burden would be transferred to the taxpayers of the United Kingdom, which would otherwise be borne by those to whom it properly belonged, owing to their interests being more immediately concerned. It is also a point of primary importance, that those persons should emigrate who, from age, health, character, and circumstances, are best able to contend with the hardships and difficulties of a settler's life, and it was considered that this object would be most fully attained if the emigration were entirely voluntary. The true test of fitness in this case is the possession, on the part of each individual concerned, of the will and ability to emigrate; and the probability of helpless multitudes being sent forth, who, both for their own sakes and for that of the colony, ought to have remained at home, is increased in proportion as other motives and other interests besides those of the emigrant himself influence his act of expatriation. For these reasons Her Majesty's ministers determined to confine themselves to taking increased securities for the safety of the emigrants during their voyage, and their early and satisfactory settlement after their arrival abroad. Several additional emigration agents were appointed to Liverpool and to different Irish ports; the annual vote in aid of colonial funds for the relief of sick and

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him; and until it became generally known that he had returned large sums of money, the influx did not cease. It is an interesting fact that of 30,000 yards of linen made up to the end of October, there is only one piece that was not duly returned to him by the workwomen, and Mr. Gildea thinks he shall still get the missing piece.

destitute emigrants from the United Kingdom was increased from 1000*l.* to 10,000*l.*; provision was made for giving assistance in the case of emigrant ships driven back by stress of weather, and the Governor-General of Canada was informed that Her Majesty's government would be prepared to defray its fair share of any further expense that might have to be incurred in giving the emigrants necessary relief, or in forwarding them to places where they might obtain employment.

Early in the year 1847 the roads to the Irish sea-ports were thronged with families hastening to escape the evils which impended over their native land. The complaint in Ireland, at the time, was, that those who went belonged to the best and most substantial class of the agricultural population. The complaint afterwards in Canada was, that those who came were the helpless and destitute. The fact was, that the emigrants generally belonged to that class of small holders, who, being somewhat above the level of the prevailing destitution, had sufficient resources left to enable them to make the effort required to effect their removal to a foreign land; and the steps taken by them to convert their property into an available form, had for months before been the subject of observation. Large remittances, estimated to amount to 200,000*l.* in the year ending on the 30th March, 1847, were also made by the Irish emigrants settled in the United States, and the British North American provinces, to enable their relations in Ireland to follow them.\* The emigration of 1846 from the United King-

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\* The following extract from a letter from Mr. Jacob Harvey of New York, to Mr. Jonathan Pim, one of the Secretaries of the Dublin Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, contains many interesting particulars relating to these remittances, which are highly honourable to the Irish character:—

‘New York, January 5. 1847.

‘The destitution of our poor at this season will certainly curtail the amount for Ireland, and it is used as an excuse by those who feel called upon to assist them at their own doors first. But I am happy to say that the poor labouring Irish themselves are doing their duty fully. Without any public meetings or addresses, they have been silently remitting their little savings to their relations at home; and these remittances, be it remembered, go to every parish in Ireland, and by every packet. These drafts are from 1*l.* and upwards; they probably average from 4*l.* to 5*l.* In my letter to J. H. Todhunter I told him I had ascertained from five houses here, that within the past sixty days, they have received and remitted from the poor Irish 80,000 dollars. I had not time to send round to the other houses that day; but since the steamer sailed, I have collected further

dom, which was the largest ever known up to that time, amounted to 129,851 persons; the emigration of the first three quarters of 1847 was 240,461; and almost the whole of it was from Ireland to Canada and the United States.\*

Even this does not represent the full extent of the outpouring of the population of Ireland which took place in this eventful year. From the 13th January to the 1st November, 278,005† immigrants arrived at Liverpool from Ireland, of whom only

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returns, although not yet all; and to my no small delight, the sum total remitted since November the 1st amounts to 150,000 dollars or 30,000*l.* sterling. I am now collecting an account of the sums remitted through the same houses by the poor Irish for the year 1846, and I have received returns from the five principal houses, and the sum total is 650,000 dollars, or 130,000*l.* There are yet four houses to hear from, which will swell the amount. This, however, is enough to astonish everybody who has not been aware of the facts; and it is but right that credit should be given to the poor abused Irish for having done their duty. Recollect that the donors are working men and women, and depend upon their daily labour for their daily food; that they have no settled income to rely upon; but with that charming reliance upon Divine Providence which characterises the Irish peasant, they freely send their first earnings home to father, mother, sister, or brother. I requested J. H. Todhunter to have the facts I gave him published, and I make a similar request to thee, as they are still more cheering. A publication of the kind may stimulate the rich to do their duty, where they have hitherto neglected it; and it will give evidence to those who have no faith in Irishmen, that whenever they are able to get good wages, they never forget their relatives and friends who are in want.

\* The emigration for each division of the United Kingdom during the first three quarters of 1847 was as follows; but it must be remembered that those who embarked at Liverpool consisted almost wholly of Irish. There can also be no doubt that the Irish helped to swell the tide from several other ports of Great Britain, and especially in the west of Scotland.

From Liverpool.	From other English Ports.	Total from England.	From Scotland.	From Ireland.	Total.
114,301	22,094	136,395	8,155	95,911	240,461

† Those Irish labourers who annually come to England, by way of Liverpool, to help to gather in the harvest, and return to Ireland after it is over, are included in this number. They are variously estimated at from 10,000 to 30,000.

122,981 sailed from that port to foreign countries. The conflux of this mixed multitude was formidable both to the health and resources of the inhabitants of Liverpool; but they nobly faced the danger, and exerted themselves to meet the emergency with the vigour it required. The portion of the town occupied by the Irish was divided into thirteen districts, in each of which a relief station was opened, and twenty-four additional relieving officers were appointed, under the superintendence of two inspectors. The number of persons relieved daily amounted for some time to upwards of 10,000. The district medical officers were increased from six to twenty-one, and extensive premises were hired or constructed for the purpose of being used as temporary fever hospitals. All this was done at the expense of the inhabitants, and the only assistance given by the Government was, that when the fever increased to an alarming extent, quarantine ships were stationed in the Mersey to receive the infected. Nineteen relieving officers died at Liverpool alone of fever caught in the execution of their duties. The influx of poor Irish by way of Glasgow, Ardrossan, Port Patrick, Fleetwood, the Welsh ports, Bristol, Plymouth, Southampton, and London itself, was also very large; and quarantine arrangements had to be made in the Clyde similar to those at Liverpool.

Some relief was obtained by the passing of the Act 10 and 11 Vict. c. 33., 'to amend the laws relating to the removal of poor persons from England and Scotland'; and 4583 paupers, who had become chargeable to the Liverpool parochial funds, or who applied to be removed, were sent back to their own districts in Ireland, at a cost of 1322*l.*, between the 19th of July, when the act came into operation, and the 31st October. Previously to this, there was very little crime among these poor people, not even in petty thefts; but it soon appeared that they preferred being sent to prison to being sent back to Ireland. In the year ending 30th September, 1846, 398 natives of Ireland were committed to the borough prison at Liverpool for begging, pilfering about the docks, &c. In the year ending 30th September, 1847, 888 were so committed. In the month of October 1846, 80 were committed; in the same month of 1847, 142. This pauper immigration passed inland to all the large towns of this island, as far as London and Edinburgh; and the following statement of the number of Roman Catholic clergymen, who died of the Irish fever, caught in attending the sick since March 1847, may be taken as an index of the relative pressure\* :—

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\* 5000 Irish paupers were relieved in Manchester in the last week in February, and for several weeks following there were more than

*Lancashire.*

Rev. Peter Nightingale, resident priest of St. Anthony's, Great Homer Street, Liverpool.

William Parker, senior resident priest of St. Patrick's, Park Lane, Liverpool.

Richard Grayston, resident priest of St. Patrick's, Park Lane, Liverpool.

James Haggart, resident priest of St. Patrick's, Park Lane, Liverpool.

Thomas Kelly, D.D., resident priest of St. Joseph's, Grosvenor Street, Liverpool.

John F. Whitaker, removed from Manchester to succeed Dr. Kelly at St. Joseph's, where he died.

J. F. Appleton, D.D., senior resident priest of St. Peter's, Seel Street, Liverpool.

John A. Gilbert, resident priest of St. Mary's, Edmund Street, Liverpool.

William V. Dale, resident priest of St. Mary's, Edmund Street, Liverpool.

Robert Gillow, resident priest of St. Nicholas's, Copperas Hill, Liverpool.

John Hearne, senior priest of St. John's, Wigan.

Robert Johnson, resident priest of St. John's, Wigan.

John Dowdall, resident priest in Bolton.

*Cheshire.*

Michael Power, resident priest of St. Mary's, Duckinfield.

*Yorkshire.*

Thomas Billington, Vicar-General of Yorkshire district, and senior resident priest of St. Mary's, York.

Henry Wulmsley, senior resident priest of St. Anne's, Leeds.

Richard Wilson, resident priest of St. Anne's, Leeds.

Edwd. Metcalfe, successor to Rev. R. Wilson at St. Anne's, Leeds.

Joseph Curr, Secretary to Bishop Briggs, with whom he resided at Fulford House near York. He volunteered his services after the death of Mr. Metcalfe, and in the course of a few weeks died at St. Anne's, Leeds.

J. Coppinger. Removed from Hull to supply the vacancies caused by the above deaths, and very shortly after his removal died at St. Anne's, Leeds.

*Durham.*

Joseph Dugdale, resident priest of St. Mary's, Stockton.

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4000 on an average receiving out-door, and from 600 to 700 in-door relief. This was independent of the adjoining districts of Salford and Chorlton, where great numbers of Irish were also relieved. Nearly 90,000 destitute and disabled Irish, including women and children, are stated to have received parochial relief in Scotland, at a total expense of about 34,000*l.*; but as the same persons were frequently

*Northumberland.*

Rev. James Standen, senior resident priest of St. Andrew's, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Right Rev. Dr. Riddell, Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District and Bishop of Longo. After the death of Mr. Standen, Bishop Riddell undertook to attend to the visitation of the sick in person. He very soon caught the fever, and died at Newcastle.

*Staffordshire.*

Rev. James Kennedy, resident priest at Newcastle-under-Lyne.

*Gloucestershire.*

P. Hartley, resident priest of St. Peter's, Gloucester.

*Wales.*

Edward Mulcahy, resident priest of St. Mary's, Bangor, N. Wales.

M. Carroll, resident priest at Merthyr Tydvil, S. Wales.

*Scotland.*

Richard Sinnott, Stranraer, Greenock.

J. Bremner, Abbey Parish, Paisley.

W. Walsh, Old Monkland.

The pestilence, which all the precautions practicable on land could not overcome, broke out, as was to be expected, with increased virulence on board the emigrant ships. A new law was passed at Boston, in Massachusetts, empowering the local authorities to demand a bond of 1000 dollars from the masters of emigrant ships for each passenger apparently indigent, that he should not become chargeable to the state or to the city for ten years, the effect of which was to divert the stream of emigration to a greater extent than usual to Canada and New Brunswick. The deaths on the voyage to Canada increased from 5 in every 1000 persons embarked, to 55, or to eleven times their previous rate; and so many more arrived sick, that the proportion of deaths in quarantine to the numbers embarked, increased from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to no less than 60 in the 1000, making a total mortality of nearly 12 per cent.\* A medical

relieved in more than one parish, and were therefore returned by more than one inspector, the number of persons of this description newly arrived in Scotland is not so great as that above stated.

\* The details of the frightful mortality connected with the great emigration of 1847 from Ireland to Canada, are as follows:—

Deaths: On the passage	-	-	-	3,900
— In vessels during detention in quarantine				1,282
— At the quarantine station	-	-	-	3,452
— At the Marine Hospital, about	-	-	-	1,000
				<u>9,634</u>

board was appointed; large supplies of provisions were despatched to the quarantine station; tents sufficient for the reception of 10,000 persons were issued from the Ordnance stores, and the labours of the Commissariat in this war against famine and pestilence were carried on at the same time on both sides of the Atlantic; but the utmost exertions and the most liberal expenditure could not prevent a fearful amount of suffering amongst the emigrants, and a painful spread of disease to the resident population.

We are well aware that among men of talents and of benevolent dispositions, there is a wide difference on the important question of emigration; and in what follows on this subject, we wish to be understood, not as committing ourselves to particular opinions, but merely as making a statement, in pursuance of the historical character of this review, of what we believe to have been the views which guided the resolutions of the Government.

There is no subject of which a merely one-sided view is more commonly taken than that of Emigration. The evils arising from the crowded state of the population, and the facility with which large numbers of persons may be transferred to other countries, are naturally uppermost in the minds of landlords and rate-payers; but Her Majesty's Government, to which the well-being of the British population in every quarter of the globe is confided, must have an equal regard to the interests of the emigrant and of the colonial community of which he may become a member. It is a great mistake to suppose that even Canada and the United States have an unlimited capacity of absorbing a new population. The labour market in the settled districts is always so nearly full, that a small addition to the persons in search of employment makes a sensible difference; while the clearing of new land requires the possession of resources\*, and a power of sustained exertion not ordinarily belonging to the newly-arrived Irish emigrant. In this, as well as in the other operations by which society is formed or sustained, there is a natural process which cannot with impunity be departed from. A movement is continually going on towards the backwoods on

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Numerous deaths also took place among the emigrants to New Brunswick.

\* Settlers in the backwoods must have the means of support from twelve to fifteen months after their arrival, and this cannot be accomplished for less than 60*l.*, at the lowest estimate, for each family consisting of a man, his wife, and three children, or equal to 3½ adults on an average.



the part of the young and enterprising portion of the settled population, and of such of the former emigrants as have acquired means and experience; and the room thus made is occupied by persons recently arrived from Europe, who have only their labour to depend upon. The conquest of the wilderness requires more than the ordinary share of energy and perseverance, and every attempt that has yet been made to turn Paupers into Backwoodsmen by administrative measures, has ended in signal failure. As long as they were rationed, they held together in a feeble, helpless state; and when the issue of rations ceased, they generally returned to the settled parts of the country. Our recent experience of the effects of a similar state of dependence in Ireland, offers no encouragement to renew the experiment in a distant country, where the difficulties are so much greater, and a disastrous result would be so much less capable of being retrieved.

It must also be observed, that from an early period of the present distress, two modes of meeting the calamity presented themselves, which have since acquired greater distinctness in people's minds, and have been acted upon in a more and more systematic manner. The first of these was to stimulate the industry of the people, to augment the productive powers of the soil, and to promote the establishment of new industrial occupations, so as to cause the land once more to support its population, and to substitute a higher standard of subsistence, and a higher tone of popular character, for those which prevailed before. This plan aimed at accomplishing the object without the pain or risk of wholesale expatriation; and the result proposed by it was to increase the strength and prosperity of the country and the happiness of the people, by enabling the present population to maintain itself comfortably at home by the exercise of its industry. The Government adopted this plan from the first, and has since promoted its success by every means in its power. The other plan was to relieve the mother country by transferring large masses of people to the Colonies, and great efforts were made to obtain the command of public funds to assist in paying the expense of this emigration.

The main point, therefore, is, that by taking an active part in assisting emigration, the Government would throw their weight into the scale with the last of these two plans. They would assist it by their means; and, what is of far more consequence, they would countenance it by their authority: and in the same degree, they would discourage and relax the efforts of those who are exerting themselves to carry out the opposite

plan. In order to appreciate the full ultimate effect of such an interposition, it must be remembered that the solution of the great difficulty by means of emigration carried out on the scale and in the manner proposed, offers to the promoters of it the attraction of accomplishing their object by a cheap and summary process; while the other remedy, of enabling the population to live comfortably at home, can be arrived at only by an expensive, laborious, and protracted course of exertion: and it therefore behoves the Government, which holds the balance between contending parties, to take care to which side it lends its influence on a social question of this description.

Those who have purchased or inherited estates in which a redundant population has been permitted or encouraged to grow up, may with propriety assist some of their people to emigrate, provided they take care to prevent their being left destitute on their arrival in their new country. The expense of assisting emigration under such circumstances properly falls on the proprietor. A surplus population, whether it be owing to the fault or to the misfortune of the proprietor or his predecessors, must, like barrenness, or the absence of improvements, be regarded as one of the disadvantages contingent on the possession of the estate; and he who enjoys the profits and advantages of the estate, must also submit to the less desirable conditions connected with it. So long as emigration is conducted only at the expense of the proprietor, it is not likely to be carried to an injurious or dangerous extent, and it will press so heavily on his resources, as to leave the motives to exertion of a different kind unimpaired. Emigration is open to objection only when the natural checks and correctives have been neutralised by the interposition of the Government, or other public bodies. It then becomes the interest and policy of the landed proprietor to make no exertion to maintain his people at home, to produce a general impression that no such exertion could be successfully made, and to increase by every possible means the pressure upon those parties who, having the command of public funds, are expected to give their assistance; and the responsibility of the consequences, whatever they may be, becomes transferred from the individual proprietors to the Government or public body which countenances and promotes their proceedings.

Three things had become apparent before the close of the year 1846: the first was, that if these gigantic efforts were much longer continued, they must exhaust and disorganize society throughout the United Kingdom, and reduce all classes of people in Ireland to a state of helpless dependence; the second was, that provision ought to be made for the relief of

extreme destitution in some less objectionable mode than that which had been adopted, for want of a better, under the pressure of an alarming emergency; and the third was, that great efforts and great sacrifices were required to provide another and a better subsistence for the large population which had hitherto depended upon the potato. Upon these principles the plan of the Government for the season of 1847-8, and for all after time, was based.

Much the larger portion of the machinery of a good Poor Law had been set up in Ireland by the Irish Poor Relief Act (1 & 2 Vict. c. 56.), which was passed in the year 1838. The island had been divided into unions, which were generally so arranged as to secure easy communication with the central station; and these had been subdivided into electoral districts, each of which appointed its own guardian, and was chargeable only with its own poor, like our parishes. A commodious workhouse had also been built in each union by advances from the Exchequer\*, and rates had been established for its support. No relief could, however, be given outside the workhouses, and when these buildings once became filled with widows and children, aged and sick, and others who might with equal safety and more humanity have been supported at their own homes, they ceased to be either a medium of relief or a test of destitution to the other destitute poor of the union. To remedy this and other defects of the existing system, three Acts of Parliament were passed in the Session of 1847†, the principal provisions of which were as follows:—Destitute persons who are either permanently or temporarily disabled from labour, and destitute widows having two or more legitimate children dependent upon them, may be relieved either in or out of the workhouse, at the discretion of the guardians. If, owing to want of room, or to the prevalence of fever or any infectious disorder, adequate relief cannot be afforded in a workhouse to persons not belonging to either of the above-

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\* The repayment of these advances, which amount altogether to £1,145,800*l.*, has not yet been pressed, out of consideration for the circumstances of the country.

† An Act to make further provision for the Relief of the Destitute Poor in Ireland, 10 Vict. cap. 31.—[Passed 8th June, 1847.]

An Act to provide for the Execution of the Laws for the Relief of the Poor in Ireland, 10 and 11 Vict. cap. 90.—[Passed 22d July, 1847.]

An Act to make provision for the Punishment of Vagrants and Persons offending against the Laws in force for the Relief of the Destitute Poor in Ireland, 10 and 11 Vict. cap. 84 — [Passed 22d July, 1847.]

mentioned classes, the Poor Law Commissioners may authorise the guardians to give them out-door relief in food only; the Commissioners' order for which purpose can only be made for a period of two months, but, if necessary, it can be renewed from time to time. Relieving officers and medical officers for affording medical relief out of the workhouse are to be appointed; and in cases of sudden and urgent necessity, the relieving officers are to give 'immediate and temporary relief in food, 'lodging, medicine, or medical attendance,' until the next meeting of the guardians. After the 1st November, 1847, no person is to be relieved either in or out of a workhouse, who is in the occupation of more than a quarter of an acre of land. No person is to be deemed to have been a resident in an electoral division so as to make it chargeable with the expense of relieving him, who shall not during the three years before his application for relief have occupied some tenement within it, or have usually slept within it for thirty calendar months. All magistrates residing in the union are to be *ex-officio* guardians, provided the number does not exceed that of elected guardians. Greater facilities are given for dissolving Boards of Guardians, in case they do not duly and effectually discharge their duty according to the intention of the several Acts in force. Public beggars and persons going from one district to another for the purpose of obtaining relief are rendered liable to one month's imprisonment with hard labour; and an independent Poor Law establishment is constituted for Ireland, consisting of three Commissioners (two of whom are to be the Secretary and Under-Secretary for Ireland for the time being), an Assistant Commissioner and Secretary, and as many Inspectors as may be required.

The principle of a comprehensive Poor Law and of the abolition of mendicancy, having thus been established, the efforts of the Government were earnestly directed to the removal of the difficulties likely to impede its satisfactory working. The repayment of the first instalment due on account of the advances for the Relief Works of the winter and spring of 1846-7, (9 and 10 Vict. c. 107.) was postponed until after the Spring Assizes of 1848, and it was announced that no demand would be made until after the 1st January, 1848, for the repayment of the advances under the temporary Relief Act, when the rates levied previously to that date for the current expenses of the permanent Poor Law equalled or exceeded 3s. in the pound, and that even when rates had been struck for the purpose of repaying the advances, they might, if necessary, be applied to defraying those current expenses. By these arrange-

ments the demands for repayment between the Summer Assizes of 1847 and the Spring Assizes of 1848 were limited to the second instalment for the Relief Works and repairs of Grand Jury Roads of 1846, (9 Vict. c. 1, and 2.) amounting only to 27,000*l.* for the whole of Ireland; and after providing for this and for the expense of the gaols and other ordinary local demands, all the rates levied from the produce of the abundant harvest of 1847 became applicable to the relief of the people under the Poor Law, then for the first time coming into full operation. The Guardians were at the same time earnestly recommended by the Poor Law Commissioners to strike rates sufficient to meet the exigencies of the coming winter, and to be strict in the levy of them. They were advised to guard against the necessity of giving out-door relief to the able-bodied, by providing for disabled persons, widows, school-children, and fever patients out of the workhouse; and five Boards of Guardians which had obstinately persisted in not doing their duty were dissolved, and paid Guardians were appointed in their place. Ireland had now had a year and a half's experience of the administration of relief on a great scale and in different ways, and the objects to be aimed at and the abuses to be avoided had become generally known. 'The very evil itself,' the Relief Commissioners observe in their Sixth Monthly Report, 'has been attended with a salutary reaction, and the whole country seems, by this experience, to have been made sensible that it is only by the most rigid and thoroughly controlled principles of affording relief by any public arrangement, that society can be protected from a state of almost universal pauperisation, and that the charge of a more benevolent alleviation of distress than what is absolutely necessary for the bare support of the thoroughly destitute, must and ought to be left to the exertions and voluntary distribution of the charitable and humane, which it is hoped will always be largely afforded.' During the week ended Saturday the 14th August 1847, there were above 20,000 persons on the relief lists of the electoral division which comprises the northern half of the city of Dublin; and as the operations under the Temporary Relief Act terminated in that union on the 15th, the guardians, on the 16th, had to deal with the apparent necessity of having to provide relief for above 20,000 persons. On the morning of that day, however, owing to previous arrangements, they had room in the workhouse of their union for 400 individuals, and by offering workhouse relief to applicants, aided by some assistance from the Mendicity Institution, the guardians were enabled in the course of six days to reduce the number on the relief lists to

about 3000 persons. This is only one instance among many that might be adduced, of the practical value of the experience that has been acquired in Ireland of the true principles of Poor Law management.

A principle of great power has thus been introduced into the social system of Ireland, which must be productive of many important consequences besides those which directly flow from it. Mr. Drummond's apophthegm, that 'property has its duties 'as well as its rights,' having now received the sanction of law, it can never hereafter be a matter of indifference to a landed proprietor, what the condition of the people on his estate is. The day has gone by for letting things take their course, and landlords and farmers have the plain alternative placed before them of supporting the people in idleness or in profitable labour. Hitherto the duties of Irish landlords had been, as jurists would say, of imperfect obligation. In other words, their performance depended upon conscience, benevolence, and a more enlightened and far-seeing view of personal interest than belongs to the generality of men, the consequence of which has been a remarkable difference in the conduct of Irish landlords; and while some have made all the sacrifices and exertions which their position required, others have been guilty of that entire abandonment of duty which has brought reproach upon their order. For the future this cannot be. The necessity of self-preservation, and the knowledge that rents can be saved from the encroachments of poor-rates, only in proportion as the poor are cared for and profitably employed, will secure a fair average good conduct on the part of landed proprietors, as in England, and more favourable circumstances will induce improved habits. The poor-rate is an absentee tax of the best description; because, besides bringing non-resident proprietors under contribution, it gives them powerful motives either to reside on their estates or to take care that they are managed, in their absence, with a proper regard to the welfare of the poor.\* Lastly, the per-

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\* 'I would sincerely regret that anything I have said should appear to be written as if I sought occasion to point out errors, and hold them up; far from it; I mention them with sorrow, and a kindly wish that they may be corrected. The position of the respectable classes at this moment in many instances is surely pitiable. There is but one course by which this country can rise, and take her proper position, and that is by a hearty and sincere determination to work for the public good, at the same time throwing aside all selfish and party feeling. In that case, there is no reason why we should despair; but otherwise, no mortal can either pass laws, or propose any other thing which would be attended with

formance of duty supposes the enjoyment of equivalent rights. When rich and poor are at one again, the repudiating farmer

success. In this I particularly allude to the Poor Law now about to be administered. I look upon it as an indirect absentee tax, drawing from those who did not contribute before, or in a very slight degree. It assures the poor man that from the land he must have support, and that what he labours on will one day sustain him when he can no longer toil. It will also compel others to consider that unless employment is provided, they must support him without a remunerative return,—and if this is rightly considered, then the heavy affliction which the Almighty has been pleased to lay on them will prove a lesson for good.

‘On the subject of relief being given without having a corresponding return for it in labour, I feel very apprehensive that, owing to the habits of the lower orders, the present repugnance to entering the union-house may give way, and that for the sake of an idle life, they may accept the terms. To prevent this, and rescue both landlord and peasant from certain ruin, there must be employment given fairly remunerative to both, not by Government, but by the owners of the soil. Until lately, what was the condition of the peasant? Work as he would, till and rear what he might, he could never hope to benefit. His portion was the potato only, shared, it may be said, with his pig. He dare not use anything else. Let misfortune come on him, or disease render him unable to work, he had no claim on the land. One a little less poor than himself might help him, but who else? The charity I have seen has been from the poor to the poor. Is it any wonder that they became spiritless, idle, and even worse?’

‘A townland near here, owned by a landlord who resides constantly away, is let to a middleman at 10s. an acre. That middleman resides away also, and he relets it to a person who lives in the county of Cork, and only occasionally comes there. It is sublet again, until the price received for a quarter of an acre is 17. 10s. per annum. Can that place be otherwise than full of distress?’

‘Near it is another townland. The owner resides here, but he has never attended to it. In the late calamity he applied to me for seed and assistance, declaring his intention to provide seed at his own expense; and to insure its being sown, he said he should employ a person to superintend the sowing, as the land was prepared. His tenants were without food; but to encourage and assist in this case, an application was made by me to the Society of Friends for a supply to sustain the people while working, which was granted. The party supposed he had about sixty to provide for, but was frightened at over 600 applications for food; and it then came out that his land was underlet to an enormous degree. He had never paid proper attention by inspecting his farms, &c. The result is, that now he can neither get rent, nor the repayment of the value of the seed. What has been grown will not suffice to feed those who are located

will find the position of his landlord too strong to allow of his taking his present license, and it will then be fearlessly asserted that the converse of Mr. Drummond's maxim is also true, and that 'Property has its rights as well as its duties.' For the first time in the history of Ireland, the poor man has become sensibly alive to the idea that the law is his friend, and the exhortation of the parish priest of Dingle to his flock in September, 1847, indicates an epoch in the progress of society in Ireland: — 'Heretofore landlords have had agents who collected their rents, and they supported them. The grand jury had agents to collect the county-cess, and they supported them. Now, for the first time, the poor man has an agent to collect *his* rent. That agent is the poor-rate collector, and he should be supported by the poor.' Time must, however, be allowed for the gradual working of this feeling, before its full effects can be seen.

Those who object to the existing Poor Law are bound to point out a more certain and unobjectionable mode of relieving the destitute and securing the regular employment of the poor. The principle of the Poor Law is, that rate after rate should be levied *for the preservation of life*, until the landowners and farmers either enable the people to support themselves by honest industry, or dispose of their property to those who can and will perform this indispensable duty.

The fearful problem to be solved in Ireland, stated in its simplest form, is this: — A large population subsisting on potatoes which they raised for themselves, has been deprived of that resource, and how are they now to be supported? The obvious answer is, by growing something else. But that cannot be, because the small patches of land which maintained a family when laid down to potatoes, are insufficient for the purpose when laid down to corn or any other kind of produce; and corn cultivation requires capital and skill, and combined labour, which the cottier and conacre tenants do not possess. The

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on the land. They cannot pay rent, and they will not give up their holdings. The population has been increased in such cases, and others, to an extent beyond what the land can bear. Another cause is, that the Roman Catholic clergy derive their income mainly from fees and contributions at marriages and christenings; and though there are some who see the disastrous result of encouraging the increase of the population, and are scrupulous on that head, still, as their subsistence depends on it, it cannot be expected that they will exert themselves in a way likely to deprive themselves of daily bread by discouraging thoughtless rushing into improvident marriages.' — *Captain Mann's Narrative.*



position occupied by these classes is no longer tenable, and it is necessary for them either to become substantial farmers, or to live by the wages of their labour. They must still depend for their subsistence upon agriculture, but upon agriculture conducted according to new and very improved conditions. Both the kind of food and the means of procuring it have changed. The people will henceforth principally live upon grain, either imported from abroad or grown in the country, which they will purchase out of their wages; and corn and cattle will be exported, as the piece-goods of Manchester are, to provide the fund out of which the community will be maintained under the several heads of wages, profits, and rents. It is in vain that the granary of the merchant and the homestead of the farmer are filled to overflowing, if the mass of the people have not the means of purchasing, and it has therefore become of the highest consequence that the resources which are most available for the payment of wages should be cultivated to the utmost. The Poor Law cannot alone bear the whole weight of the existing pauperism of Ireland; and its unproductive expenditure, however indispensable, must be supported by adequate industrial efforts, in order to prevent all classes of society from being involved in one common ruin. Before this crisis occurred, Sir Robert Kane had proved in theory, and many good farmers in practice, that a much larger produce might be raised, and a much larger population might be supported from the soil of Ireland than heretofore; and this view has since been confirmed by numerous surveys conducted under the superintendence of the Board of Works, which have disclosed an extensive and varied field for the investment of capital, upon which the whole unemployed population of Ireland might be employed with much advantage to all parties concerned. The great resource of Ireland consists in the cultivation of her soil, the improvement of her cattle, the extension of her fisheries; and while there are large tracts of flooded land to be reclaimed, and still larger tracts of half cultivated land to be brought to a higher state of productiveness, it would be a misdirection of capital to employ it in the less profitable manufactures of cotton and wool. Ireland is benefited to a greater extent than many parts of Scotland and England are, by the markets and the means of employment which Manchester and Glasgow afford; but her own staple manufacture is corn.

<sup>1</sup> The Treasury was authorised by the 1 & 2 Wm. 4. c. 33., passed in 1831, to lend money to private individuals for the improvement of their estates, provided the value of the estate was increased 10 per cent. and repayment was made in three years;

and by the first Act of the Session of 1846 the period of repayment was extended to twenty years. This power was however very sparingly acted on. Grave objections existed to the State becoming a general creditor throughout the country, and the operations of private capitalists were likely to be deranged and suspended by the interference of such a competitor. A rate of interest (5 per cent.) higher than the market rate for money lent on mortgage, was therefore charged, and the result was, that only three persons took out loans under this arrangement, one of whom was the late Lord Bessborough. At the close of the Session of 1846, the Act 9 & 10 Vict. c. 101. was passed, by which 1,000,000*l.* was authorised to be lent for drainage in Ireland, and repayment was to be made in equal half-yearly instalments, spread over twenty-two years, including interest at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; but this Act could not be worked, so far as Ireland was concerned, partly owing to a legal opinion that tenants for life were not eligible for loans under it, and partly because the works must be executed to a certain extent before the money could be advanced. Upon this the Treasury issued a Minute dated the 1st, and a letter dated the 15th of December, 1846\*, offering to lend money for the general improvement of estates, including drainage, on a footing which combined the advantages of the previous Acts with the indulgent mode of repayment introduced by the last; and in the following Session the Act 10 & 11 Vict. c. 32. was passed, by which all the existing legislation on the subject was consolidated, and loans† were authorised to be made in Ireland to the extent of 1,500,000*l.*, on the principle that the improvements on each estate are to be executed by the proprietor, and that the interference of the officers of the Government is to be confined to ascertaining, in the first instance, that the proposed improvements are likely to

\* First Board of Works Series of 1846-7, pp. 338—341.

† The purposes to which these loans are applicable are as follows:—

1. The drainage of lands by any means which may be approved by the Commissioners.
2. The subsoiling, trenching, or otherwise deepening and improving the soil of lands.
3. The irrigation or warping of lands.
4. The embankment of lands from the sea or tidal waters, or rivers.
5. The enclosing or fencing, or improving the fences, drains, streams, or water-courses of land.
6. The reclamation of waste or other land.
7. The making of farm-roads.
8. The clearing land of rocks and stones.

be of such a permanent and productive character as would justify the cost of them being made a charge upon the estate, with priority over other incumbrances, and afterwards to inspecting the works from time to time, so as to secure the proper application of the sums advanced to the purposes for which they were intended. No advance can be made under this Act unless the increased annual value to be added to the land by the proposed improvement shall equal the amount to be charged on it; and a difficulty having arisen from the circumstance that the full benefit to be derived from draining is attained in different soils at different periods after the completion of the drains, it was declared by a Treasury Minute, dated the 15th June, 1847, that it is not necessary that each portion of land improved should yield, in the first and in every subsequent year, an additional rent equal to  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum on the outlay beyond the present rent; but that the general result of the improvement of the lands on which the rent-charge is to be secured, will, one year with another, from the period when the full benefit of the improvement may be supposed to have accrued, be such as to produce an increased annual value to the above extent; taking care, of course, that the rent-charge is fixed upon lands amply sufficient to secure the repayment to the Government of the sums so charged. These directions had particular reference to the circumstances of the poverty-stricken districts in the West of Ireland, where it is peculiarly desirable to increase the food grown on the spot, and to provide the means of employment for the people in the productive avocations of agriculture; and every practicable facility and preference is therefore given to the landed proprietors in those districts which is not inconsistent with justice to other parties. It was determined by the same Minute, in pursuance of the course taken by Parliament with respect to the loans for drainage in England and Scotland, that the loans to be made to any one landed proprietor should not, under ordinary circumstances, exceed, in the aggregate, the sum of 12,000*l.*; but if, in any particular case, owing to the extent of the property to be improved, or other causes, it should be advisable to enlarge this limit, the Lords of the Treasury will be prepared to authorise such additional sum as may appear to be proper, not exceeding, however, an aggregate amount to the same proprietor of 20,000*l.*

In taking its line on this subject, the Government had to choose between employing the agency of the landed proprietors and that of public officers; and after much consideration and some experience, the final decision was in favour of the former alternative as above described.

By following this course, all the existing relations of society were preserved and strengthened; the landed proprietors were held to their responsibility for the well-being of the people residing on their estates, and they were assisted to the extent of the loan fund placed by Parliament at the disposal of the Government. The proprietor or his agent has the strongest interest in seeing that the work is well done, and can exercise the most effectual superintendence over it; and as the people are invited to exert themselves under the eye of their natural employers, the healthy relation of master and labourer becomes established throughout the country. It has not, as yet, been usual in Ireland, for the landlord to undertake to make the more expensive and permanent improvements, as is the case in England, but it may be hoped that an impulse will be given to this wholesome practice by the loans to proprietors under the Land Improvement Act. The landlord will be encouraged to proceed in a course of improvement which he finds by experience to be profitable to him; he will be likely to make further investments on land which has been reclaimed or improved by him, and he will be especially careful to prevent it from being subdivided into small holdings.\*

The other plan, of reclaiming waste lands by the direct agency of the Government, did not survive the objections made to it on the score of its interference with the rights of private property. The land must be obtained before it could be improved, and was it to be left to the discretion of Commissioners to take any bog-land they pleased at a valuation; to single out, for instance, a tract of unreclaimed land in the centre of an estate? Some firm land also must be annexed to each

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\* By neglecting their estates, and omitting to construct proper farm-buildings, and to make other necessary improvements, Irish landlords relinquish their position in rural society, and give free scope to the agrarian revolutionary plans which, under the name of 'fixity of tenure,' and 'tenant right,' would dispossess the landlord without conferring any permanent benefit on the tenant. In the smaller class of holdings, the entire gross produce is insufficient to support a family, without allowing for either rent, seed, or taxes; and even supposing that, with the dangerous help of the potato, eked out by harvest-work and begging, a rent is paid, the tendency to multiply and subdivide is so strong, that if the whole rent were given up, the holders would become, in a generation or two, much more numerous and equally poor. The fact is, that the main hope of extrication from the Slough of Despond in which the small holders in the centre and west of Ireland are at present sunk, is, from the enterprise, and capital, and improved husbandry of the class of owners commonly known by the name of Landlords.

allotment for the erection of the farm buildings, and to obtain soil for the improvement of the bog, and this would have given a still wider and more arbitrary discretion to the Commissioners. The compulsory powers had therefore to be given up, and without them the plan could not be worked.

But there are other objections to this plan which have a much deeper root. The first result of the Government undertaking to reclaim the waste lands of Ireland would be, that the mass of the people would throw themselves on these works as they did upon the roads, taking it for granted that the means of payment were inexhaustible, and that less labour would be exacted than in employment offered with a view to private profit. The landlords and farmers would consider that, as the Government had undertaken to employ the people and improve the soil, they were themselves absolved from responsibility, and they would refer all the persons who applied to them for employment, to the Government works, as has been so often done on former occasions. The single agency of the Government would be substituted for the exertions of the whole body of the landowners acting in concert with their tenants and dependents; and instead of landed proprietors and farmers laying out their own money for their own benefit, with all the care and economy which this supposes, we should have hundreds of public officers, of various grades and characters, expending public money, for the supposed benefit of the public, in a business totally foreign to the proper functions of Government, and without a possibility of effectual superintendence; the inevitable consequence of which would be bad work, idle habits, and profuse and wasteful expenditure. Lastly, when the land had been reclaimed, whatever care might be taken to dispose of it in farms of reasonable size, however durable might be the interest granted, or whatever legal restrictions might be attempted to be imposed, the old process of the subdivision of the land, and the multiplication of the persons subsisting upon it, would run its course. Nothing can supply the place of the watchful supervision exercised by a proprietor, for the protection of his own interests, in such a case.

A peasant proprietary may succeed to a certain extent\*, where there is a foundation of steadiness of character, and a habit of prudence, and a spring of pride, and a value for independence

\* In what follows we must be understood as giving expression to the practical conclusions of those who, having been charged with the unenviable task of superintending the measures of relief, and assisting to replace society on a permanent basis after it had been unsettled by this great calamity, must be allowed to have had unusual advantages for a close examination of the subject under a variety of aspects.

and comfort; but we fear that all these words merely show the vain nature of schemes of peasant proprietorship for Ireland. The small holders of Belgium\*, with all their industry and frugality, have, during this calamitous period, been the most distressed population in Europe next to Ireland. Their own resources were too small to carry them through a season of dearth, and they had no employers to assist them. In India, society is based on a system of small holdings, and there is no country in which destructive famines have been so common. In Ireland itself, the greatest over-population, and consequently the greatest distress, prevailed in those districts in which, owing to the existence of long leases, the landlords had no power to prevent the subdivision of the land. Mere security of tenure is of no avail, without the capital, and skill, and habits of life, and, above all, the wholesome moral qualities required to turn this advantage to good account. During the late season of dearth, food was dearer in the long peninsula which stretches to the south-west of England, than it was in Ireland, and the poor had no resource analogous to the farming stock of the Irish small holder; but the Devonshire and Somersetshire labourer lives by wages paid by persons richer than himself; and though severely pinched, he had enough for daily bread, without having recourse to charitable aid. The south-west of

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\* The same results appeared in those parts of France, Switzerland, Germany, and Sweden, in which the subdivision of the land has been carried to the greatest extent. The following extract, from a letter received in January last from Brest, contains a correct description of the manner in which that part of France was affected by the dearth: — ‘All the petty farmers are in the greatest distress, having been obliged to sell their wheat and most of their other grain in October, to pay their rents due on Michaelmas Day. The overplus in the crop of buckwheat is not sufficient to compensate for the deficiency in their stock of potatoes, and they are now living on cabbages, carrots, and a very small proportion of buckwheat. Unless some stringent measures be adopted to prevent the progressive subdivision of land in France, the country must eventually be reduced to the present state of Ireland.’ It has been justly observed, that ‘in agriculture, as in every other industrial process, prosperity must depend upon the application of capital to production; and equal injury is done when such application of capital is prevented, either by landlords refusing to give tenants a beneficial interest in their improvements, or by a combination of pauper occupants to prevent capitalists from obtaining possession of land.’ Those who take an interest in this important subject will do well to read Mr. M’Culloch’s excellent chapter on ‘Compulsory Partition,’ in his recently-published work ‘On the Succession to Property vacant by Death.’

England is the least favourable specimen which Great Britain affords of the system of society based upon wages, because the flourishing manufactures which formerly existed in that quarter have disappeared before the superior natural advantages of the North, and wages are consequently very low.\* In every other part of this island the contrast is more decidedly to the disadvantage of the small holdings; and in Northumberland, which is a county of large farms, there may be said to be no poor. Whether the good order, the physical well-being, or the moral and intellectual progress of rural society be considered, the best model is that in which the educated and enlightened proprietor, the substantial farmer, and the industrious labourer on regular wages, each performs his appropriate part.

The works required for deepening and straightening the course of many of the rivers are of peculiar importance to Ireland; because until the outfalls have been cleared, the landowners cannot enter upon the detailed or thorough drainage of their respective estates. In such cases the necessity of working upon the lands of different proprietors calls for the active interposition of the Board of Works, who make the preliminary survey, execute the work, and afterwards apportion the charge, according to the benefit derived by each person interested. The funds for carrying on these improvements had been chiefly obtained by the issue of debentures under the authority of the Acts of Parliament relating to the subject; but, under existing circumstances, loans were not to be expected from private individuals at a moderate rate of interest; and the ordinary loan fund of the Board of Works, amounting to 60,000*l.* a year, was therefore reinforced with 120,000*l.*, transferred to it from the London Loan Commissioners, and 250,000*l.* issued from the Consolidated Fund: making altogether a sum of 430,000*l.* placed at the disposal of the Board of Works, between the 1st April, 1847, and the 1st April, 1848, to be advanced by them for works of utility in Ireland, but principally for drainage of this description.

Next to agricultural improvements, well-selected public works perhaps offer the greatest resource in the present unhappy circumstances of Ireland. It is a mistake to suppose

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\* The inferior condition of the peasantry in the west of England is in a great degree owing to the increased use of the potato, the cultivation of which by the poor was much encouraged by the gentry and clergy as a cheap means of subsistence during the high prices of corn in the last war. Somersetshire and Devonshire were, in fact, fast becoming potato countries; and if the blight of that vegetable had occurred twenty years later, their sufferings might have approached to those of Ireland.

that opening a good road may not be the most reproductive work in many districts; and the construction of railroads on the great lines of communication, does for the whole country what new roads do for particular districts, facilitating and stimulating every description of production, and agriculture more than all, binding society together by a closer intercourse and interchange of good offices, and rapidly diffusing through the remote provinces the advantages enjoyed by the more favoured parts of the country.

The objection to Lord George Bentinck's plan for assisting Irish railways was, that while it was inadequate as a measure of relief, it was too large and indiscriminate when viewed as a measure for the promotion of public works. Private enterprise would have been overlaid; the bad lines would have been benefited at the expense of the good; the public credit would have been lowered; the available stock of national capital would have suffered an additional drain which it could ill afford; and after all, the object of relieving the existing distress would not have been attained. The famine was then at its height, and it could not be stayed by any measure short of distributing food to the multitude. After allowing for the largest number of persons who could be employed on railways, millions must still have starved, if other more effectual steps had not been taken; and the sums advanced to the Railway Companies, large as they would have been, would not have perceptibly diminished the expense of feeding a whole nation.\* When this primary object had been attained, and all the funds had been raised by loan which the state of Ireland required, the Government was then in a position to consider what assistance could be given to

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\* Lord George Bentinck stated, that 1500 miles of railroad would give constant employment, either on the line or in the various occupations connected with it, to 110,000 able-bodied labourers and artificers, representing, with their families, 550,000 persons; but even supposing that all these labourers and others had been set to work at once, they would have been selected from the classes of persons least likely to require charitable assistance, while the weak and infirm would have been systematically excluded. The number of persons for whom the Government had to provide the means of subsistence at this crisis was upwards of three millions; and this had to be done in the neighbourhood of their own homes, which could not be accomplished by means of railroads, employment on which is confined to particular localities. The number of persons stated in the House of Commons as likely to be employed on railroads in Ireland was greatly overrated; the general surface of the country requires scarcely any deep cuttings or embankments; and the eskars, through which the cuttings are made, offer the finest possible material for ballasting.



railroads in common with other works of public utility; and 620,000*l.* was voted by Parliament to be lent to Railways which were legally able to borrow, owing to their having paid up half their capital, and could undertake to expend within a certain fixed time, another sum of their own equal to that advanced to them. By the aid thus given, the great South-Western Railway of Ireland will be enabled to employ a large number of men throughout the winter, and the important object of opening the communication between Dublin, Cork, and Limerick, will be accomplished at a much earlier period than would otherwise have been the case.

The other works in progress in Ireland with the aid of grants or loans from Parliament, are as follows: the Shannon navigation, which has been in operation for several years; the construction of new floating docks and markets at Limerick, works at Hawlbowlane, with a view to render that place more useful as a naval station; four great works of combined navigation and drainage; the construction of three new colleges, and of several prisons and lunatic asylums; and the repair and construction of fishery piers, for which 50,000*l.* was voted in the session of 1846, and a further sum of 40,000*l.* in the session of 1847.

Having thus furnished as clear a sketch as the variety and complexity of the incidents would allow, of this remarkable crisis in our national affairs, when the events of many years were crowded into two short seasons, and a foundation was laid for social changes of the highest importance, it may be asked what fruits have yet appeared of this portentous seed-time, and what the experience is which we have purchased at so heavy a cost?

First, it has been proved to demonstration, that local distress cannot be relieved out of national funds without great abuses and evils, tending, by a direct and rapid process, to an entire disorganisation of society. This is, in effect, to expose the common stock to a general scramble. All are interested in getting as much as they can. It is nobody's concern to put a check on the expenditure. If the poor man prefers idling on relief works or being rationed with his wife and children, to hard labour; if the farmer discharges his labourers and makes the state of things a plea for not paying rates or rent; if the landed proprietor joins in the common cry, hoping to obtain some present advantage, and trusting to the chance of escaping future payments, it is not the men, but the system, which is in fault. Ireland is not the only country which would have been thrown off its balance by the attraction of 'public money' *à discrétion*. This false principle eats like a canker into the moral health and

physical prosperity of the people. All classes 'make a poor 'mouth,' as it is expressively called in Ireland. They conceal their advantages, exaggerate their difficulties, and relax their exertions. The cottier does not sow his holding, the proprietor does not employ his poor in improving his estate, because by doing so they would disentitle themselves to their 'share of 'the relief.' The common wealth suffers both by the lavish consumption and the diminished production, and the bees of the hive, however they may redouble their exertions, must soon sink under the accumulated burden. The officers of Government, overborne by numbers, and unable to test the interested representations pressed upon them from all quarters, cannot exercise their usual watchful care over the expenditure of the public money. Those persons who have the will to do their duty, have not the power. Those who have the power, have not the will. There is only one way in which the relief of the destitute ever has been, or ever will be, conducted consistently with the general welfare, and that is by *making it a local charge*. Those who know how to discriminate between the different claims for relief, then become actuated by a powerful motive to use that knowledge aright. They are spending *their own money*. At the same time, those who have the means of employing the people in reproductive works, have the strongest inducement given them to do so. The struggle now is to keep the poor off the rates, and if their labour only replaces the cost of their food, it is cheaper than having to maintain them in perfect idleness.

Another point which has been established by the result of these extensive experiments in the science, if it may be so called, of relieving the destitute, is that two things ought to be carefully separated which are often confounded. Improvement is always a good thing, and relief is occasionally a necessary thing, but the mixture of the two is almost always bad; and when it is attempted on a large scale without proper means of keeping it in check, it is likely to affect in a very injurious manner the ordinary motives and processes by which the business of society is carried on. Relief, taken by itself, offers, if it is properly administered, no motive to misrepresent the condition of the people; and being burdensome to the higher, and distasteful to the lower classes, it is capable of being carefully tested and subjected to effectual control. But when relief is connected with profitable improvements and full wages, the most influential persons in each locality become at once interested in establishing a case in favour of it, and the higher are always ready to join with the lower classes in pressing forward *relief works* on a plea of urgent general distress, which it may be impossible to analyse

and difficult to resist. Relief ought to be confined as much as possible to the infirm and helpless. Wages, by means of which improvements are carried on, should be given by preference to the able-bodied and vigorous. Relief ought to be on the lowest scale necessary for subsistence. Wages should be sufficiently liberal to secure the best exertions of the labourer. Relief should be made so unattractive as to furnish no motive to ask for it, except in the absence of every other means of subsistence. Improvements should be encouraged and urged forward by every practicable means, both as regards the parties undertaking them, and those by whom they are executed. If labour is connected with relief, it should only be as a test of the destitution of the applicant, and of his being consequently entitled to a bare subsistence, in the same way as confinement in a workhouse is also a test; and the true way to make relief conducive to improvement, is to give the rich no choice between maintaining the able-bodied poor in idleness or employing them on full wages on profitable works, and to take care that the poor have no reason to prefer living in idleness on public alms, to the active exercise of their industry.

Among all our discouragements, there are not wanting many and sure grounds of hope for the future. The best sign of all is, that the case of Ireland is at last understood. Irish affairs are no longer a craft and mystery. The abyss has been fathomed. The famine has acted with a force which nothing could resist, and has exposed to view the real state of the country, so that he who runs may read. We have gained, both by what has been unlearned, and by what has been learned during the last two years: and the result is, that the great majority of people, both in Ireland and England, are now agreed upon the course which ought to be pursued, in order to arrive at the wished-for end. The attention of the two countries has also been so long directed to the same subject, that a new reciprocity of interest and feeling has been established, and the public opinion of each has begun to act upon the other with a force which was never felt before.

The Irish have been disabused of one of the strangest delusions which ever paralysed the energies of a naturally intelligent and energetic people. Those who knew the country best were aware of the habitual dependence of the upper classes upon the Government; and it was a common saying of former days, that, an Irish gentleman could not even marry his daughter\* without going to the Castle for assistance. The vulgar idea was, that when difficulties occurred, every personal obligation was discharged by 'bringing the matter under the considera-

'tion of the Government;' and if, in addition to this, 'a hand-  
'some support' was promised, it seldom meant more than helping  
to spend any public money that might be forthcoming. But it  
was reserved for that potent solvent, the Famine, to discover  
to the full extent, this element of the national character.  
To pass with safety through this great crisis, required that  
every man, from the highest nobleman to the meanest peasant,  
should exert himself to the utmost of his means and ability;  
instead of which, the entire unassisted burden of employing  
all the unemployed labourers of Ireland, of improving all the  
unimproved land of Ireland, and feeding all the destitute  
persons in Ireland, was heaped upon a Board consisting of five  
gentlemen sitting in an office in Dublin. The example of the  
gentry was followed with customary exaggeration by the lower  
orders, and throughout extensive districts the cultivation of the  
land was suspended in the spring of 1847 until it should be  
seen what 'encouragement' the Government would give, or,  
as it was sometimes ingenuously expressed, 'We expect the  
'Government will till the ground.' It is also a fact that the  
people in some parts of the West of Ireland neglected to a  
great extent to lay in their usual winter stock of turf in 1847,  
owing to the prevalence of a popular impression that the Queen  
would supply them with coals. Ireland has awakened from this  
dream by the occurrence of the most frightful calamities, and it  
has at last begun to be understood that the proper business of a  
Government is to enable private individuals of every rank and  
profession in life, to carry on their several occupations with free-  
dom and safety, and not itself to undertake the business of the  
landowner, merchant, money-lender, or any other function of  
social life. Reason is now able to make herself heard, and there  
has not been wanting many a warning and encouraging voice  
from Ireland herself, declaring, 'The prosperity of Ireland is  
'only to be attained by your own strong arms. We are able  
'to help ourselves. We will no longer be dependent on the  
'precarious assistance received from other lands. We will  
'never rest until every sod in Ireland brings forth abundantly  
'—till every inch of ground is in its highest and fullest  
'state of bearing. In a short time we shall have among us  
'more industry and exertion, less politics and more plough-  
'ing, less argument and more action, less debating and more  
'doing.'\*

The uniting power of a common misfortune has also been

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\* Speech of Mr. Richard Bourke, M.P. for Kildare, to his father's  
tenantry, September 1847.

felt throughout the British empire. Those who had never before exchanged words or looks of kindness, met to co-operate in this great work of charity, and good men recognised each other's merits under the distinctions by which they had been previously separated. The Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy vied with each other in their exertions for the famishing and fever-stricken people, and in numerous instances their lives became a sacrifice to the discharge of their exhausting, harassing and dangerous duties. To the priests all were indebted for the readiness with which they made their influence over their flocks subservient to the cause of order; and the minister of religion was frequently summoned to the aid of the public officer when all other means of restraining the excited multitude had failed.\* The political dissensions which had distracted Ireland for centuries became suddenly allayed. The famine was too strong even for the mighty demagogue, that great mixed character to whom Ireland owes so much good and so much evil. People of every shade of political opinion acted together, not always in an enlightened manner, but always cordially and earnestly, in making the social maladies of Ireland, and the means of healing them, the paramount object. In the hour of her utmost need, Ireland became sensible of an union of feeling and interest with the rest of the empire, which would have moved hearts less susceptible of every generous and grateful emotion than those of her sons and daughters.† Although

\* Although both did their best, it is fair to state that the Protestant clergy had some advantages which the Roman Catholic clergy did not possess. The Protestant clergy were assisted by liberal subscriptions from England; and as their stipends are primary charges on the rent, they were regularly paid even during the period of the greatest distress. The Roman Catholic clergy, on the contrary, depend, both for their own subsistence, and for the means of helping their poor and ignorant people, upon the voluntary contributions of the people themselves: and when these had nothing to give, owing to the failure of their crops and the want of employment, the clergy were reduced to great straits, which they bore with exemplary patience. The fees on marriages and baptisms, which are the principal source of the income of the Roman Catholic clergy, almost entirely ceased in some parts of the country.

† A great deal has been written, and many an account given, of the dreadful sufferings endured by the poor, but the reality in most cases far exceeded description. Indeed, none can conceive what it was but to ~~be~~ who were in it. For my part, I frequently look back on it as a fearful and horrid dream, scarcely knowing how sufficiently to express gratitude to the Almighty for having brought this country through it, even as it is. If the first measures which prepared us to meet the second and severest calamity had been neglected, it is fright-

the public efforts in her behalf were without parallel in ancient and modern history, and the private subscriptions were the largest ever raised for a charitable object, they were less remarkable than the absorbing interest with which her misfortunes were regarded for months together, both in Parliament and in society, to the exclusion of almost every other topic. It will also never be forgotten that these efforts and these sacrifices were made at a time when England was herself suffering under a severe scarcity of food, aggravated by the failure of the cotton crop, and by the pecuniary exhaustion consequent upon the vast expenditure for the construction of railways. Even in such a state of things, though serious injury was done to all her interests by the Irish Loan, and though the pressure upon the labouring classes was greatly increased by the wholesale purchase of their food, that it might be given without cost to the starving Irish, yet every sacrifice was submitted to without a murmur by the great body of the people.

Although the process by which long-established habits are changed, and society is reconstructed on a new basis, must necessarily be slow, there are not wanting signs that we are advancing by sure steps towards the desired end. The cultivation of corn has to a great extent been substituted for that of the potato; the people have become accustomed to a better description of food than the potato\*; conacre, and the

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ful to suppose what would have been the state of this afflicted country. My opinion is, that there are but very few who will not gratefully remember the generous and prompt relief afforded in this time of trouble; such sufferings, and such help, cannot be easily forgotten.' — *Captain Mann's Narrative.*

\* The Irish peasant made up for the deficiency of nutritive qualities in the potato, by the quantity he ate, amounting generally to as much as fourteen pounds in a single day; and it was therefore a general complaint at first, that the Indian corn left an uneasy sensation, arising from the absence of the habitual distension of the organs of digestion. The half raw state in which it was often eaten, arising partly from ignorance of the proper mode of cooking it, and partly from impatience to satisfy the cravings of hunger, also concurred with the previous debilitated state of the people, to produce sickness when it was first introduced. All this, however, has been got over, and the people have now not only become accustomed to the use of a grain food, but they prefer it, and declare that they feel stronger and more equal to hard work under the influence of a meal of stirabout, than of potatoes; and their improved appearance fully bears out this conclusion. One main cause of the fact which has been so often remarked, that the Irishman works better out of Ireland than in it, is, that when he leaves his native country and obtains regular employment elsewhere, he commences at the same time a more strengthening diet than the potato. It is commonly observed in Canada, that the Irish

excessive competition for land, have ceased to exist; the small holdings, which have become deserted, owing to death, or emigration, or the mere inability of the holders to obtain a subsistence from them in the absence of the potato, have, to a considerable extent, been consolidated with the adjoining farms; and the middlemen, whose occupation depends upon the existence of a numerous small tenantry, have begun to disappear. The large quantity of land left uncultivated in some of the western districts is a painful but decisive proof of the extent to which this change is taking place. The class of offences connected with the holding of land, which was the most difficult to deal with, because agrarian crimes were supported by the sympathy and approbation of the body of the people, and were generally the result of secret illegal associations, fell off in a remarkable degree\*; and although offences against

emigrants, although a much larger race of men than the French Canadians, are, for some time after their arrival, inferior to them as farm labourers; and this difference is attributed to their food. The Canadian labourer, who receives his food as part of his hire, has an ample breakfast on bread and milk. He dines at midday on *soupe aux pois*, with a full quantity of salt pork, and bread *à discrétion*. At four o'clock he is allowed a luncheon of bread and onions, and at night he has a ragout of meat and vegetables for his supper. He however works laboriously, and generally from sunrise to sunset, and is scarcely ever absent a day from his work. An Irishman cannot endure this continuous labour without better food than the potato; and in every way it is desirable to teach him the use of a more substantial diet, both to enable him to give a proper amount of labour for his hire, and in order to raise him to a higher standard as a social being. We shall not consider the object finally accomplished until the people of Ireland live upon a bread and meat diet, like those of the best parts of England and Scotland.

\* The following is the proportion of agrarian crimes in each quarter from January 1845, to November 1847:—

In the Quarter ending

Jan. 31. 1845,	the proportion is one in	-	-	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
April 30. 1845,	" "	-	-	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
July 31. 1845,	" "	-	-	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Oct. 31. 1845,	" "	-	-	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Jan. 31. 1846,	" "	-	-	4
April 30. 1846,	" "	-	-	3 $\frac{1}{2}$

In the Quarter ending

July 31. 1846,	the proportion is one in	-	-	8
Oct. 31. 1846,	" "	-	-	19
Jan. 31. 1847,	" "	-	-	54
April 30. 1847,	" "	-	-	64
July 31. 1847,	" "	-	-	42
Oct. 31. 1847,	" "	-	-	12.

other kinds of property increased, owing to the general distress, the usual difficulty was not experienced in obtaining convictions. The much-desired change in the ownership of land appears also to have commenced; and when great estates are brought to the hammer now, instead of being sold, as formerly, *en masse*, they are broken up into lots\*, which opens the door to a middle class, more likely to become resident and improving proprietors than their predecessors, and better able to maintain the stability of property and of our political institutions, because they are themselves sprung from the people. The most wholesome symptom of all, however, is that a general impression prevails, that the plan of depending on external assistance has been tried to the utmost and has failed; that people have grown worse under it instead of better; and that the experiment ought now to be made of what independent exertion will do. This feeling has been much strengthened by the necessity which has been imposed upon the upper classes through the Poor Law, of caring for the condition of the people; and the attention of the country gentlemen has in many districts been seriously directed to the means of supporting them in a manner which will be alike beneficial to the employer and the employed.

The poet Spenser commences his view of the state of Ireland by these discouraging observations: — ‘Marry, so there have been divers good plots devised, and wise counsels cast already about reformation of that realm, but they say it is the fatal destiny of that land, that no purposes whatsoever which are meant for her good will prosper or take good effect; which, whether it proceed from the very genius of the soil, or influence of the stars, or that Almighty God hath not yet appointed the time of her reformation, or that he reserveth her in this inquiet state

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The increase of agrarian crimes which has lately taken place, is more connected with resistance to the payment of rents, than with opposition to ejectments from the possession of land; and it has been almost entirely confined to the counties of Tipperary, Clare, Limerick, and Roscommon. Out of 195 crimes committed in the whole of Ireland in October 1847, 139 were committed in Clare, Limerick, and Tipperary; being 71 per cent. of the whole number, although the population of these three counties is only 13 per cent. of the population of Ireland. The districts in the north-west and south-west of Ireland, which suffered most from the failure of the potato-crop in 1845-6, were at the same time remarkable for the absence of atrocious crimes.

\* The manner in which the Clanmorris and Blessington properties, and a portion of that belonging to the Cunningham family, have been disposed of, are instances in point.



‘still for some secret scourge, which shall by her come into England, it is hard to be known, but yet much to be feared.’ Our humble but sincere conviction is, that the appointed time of Ireland’s regeneration is at last come. For several centuries we were in a state of open warfare with the native Irish, who were treated as foreign enemies, and were not admitted to the privileges and civilising influences of English law, even when they most desired it. To this succeeded a long period of mixed religious and civil persecution, when the Irish were treated as the professors of a hostile faith, and had inflicted on them irritating and degrading penalties, of which exclusion from Parliament and from civil and military office was one of the least; the general characteristics of this epoch of Irish management being, that the Protestant minority were governed by corruption, and the Roman Catholic majority by intimidation. During all this time England reaped as she sowed: and as she kept the people in a chronic state of exasperation against herself, none of her ‘good plots and wise counsels’ for their benefit succeeded; for there was no want of good intention, and the fault was principally in the mistaken opinions of the age, which led to persecution in other countries besides Ireland. Now, thank God, we are in a different position; and although many waves of disturbance must pass over us before that troubled sea can entirely subside, and time must be allowed for morbid habits to give place to a more healthy action, England and Ireland are, with one great exception, subject to equal laws: and, so far as the maladies of Ireland are traceable to political causes, nearly every practicable remedy has been applied. The deep and inveterate root of social evil remained, and this has been laid bare by a direct stroke of an all-wise and all-merciful Providence, as if this part of the case were beyond the unassisted power of man. Innumerable had been the specifics which the wit of man had devised; but even the idea of the sharp but effectual remedy by which the cure is likely to be effected, had never occurred to any one. God grant that the generation to which this great opportunity has been offered may rightly perform its part, and that we may not relax our efforts until Ireland fully participates in the social health and physical prosperity of Great Britain, which will be the true consummation of their union.

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THE

# EDINBURGH REVIEW,

APRIL, 1848.

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- ART. I. — 1. *The Apology of Socrates; the Crito, and Part of the Phædo.* With Notes from Stallbaum, and Schleiermacher's Introductions. 12mo. London, 1840.
2. *A Life of Socrates.* By Dr. G. WIGGERS. Translated from the German. With Notes. 12mo. London, 1840.
3. *A Biographical History of Philosophy.* By G. H. LEWES. Series I. *Ancient Philosophy.* 2 vols. 12mo. London.
4. *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology.* Edited by WM. SMITH, LL.D., Editor of the 'Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities.' Art. *Plato.*
5. *Initia Philosophiæ Platonice.* P. Van HEUSDE. 8vo. Traj. 1827.

MANY of our readers doubtless recollect Warburton's criticism on Mallet, 'that he had written the life of Bacon, and had forgotten that he was a philosopher.' We almost fear lest some of them should deem us chargeable with a similar blunder, in professedly treating of Plato, and saying so little of his peculiar system of metaphysics. We are not without hope, however, if they will give us their patient attention, that they will acquit us on this point, and feel disposed to admit that in the particular phases in which we propose to regard him, there is enough, and more than enough, to occupy the limited space of a single article.

Though we have placed certain works at the head of our lucubrations, and shall refer to them from time to time as we

proceed, we need not remind our readers that it is long since reviewers supposed it to be necessary that they should have some book to review. The present article even a little transcends the ordinary licence in that respect; for it is written, not so much to criticise any works that have appeared, as to point out one or two desiderata in our literature; and in the hope that it may haply stimulate some competent scholar and enterprising publisher to supply them. It is not any one book which has produced the article; it is the hope that the article may produce a book.

So far as we can recollect, there is no great genius of antiquity at all approaching Plato, either in the importance or in the splendour of his productions, to whom, upon the whole, so little justice has been done by English translators. While many of the greatest writers of antiquity have been repeatedly translated — with various merit, indeed, but in most cases more than respectably, — a comparatively small portion of Plato's writings has occupied the attention of any English scholar at all qualified to do him justice; and that little has never been published in a form likely to command any considerable number of purchasers. But what has been done, and what may, we conceive, be successfully attempted, will be more appropriately stated after we have made a few preliminary observations.

The scholarship of our age *ought* to be able to raise up an English Schleiermacher or an English Cousin. But, waiting patiently the discharge in full of a demand, which we may be thought to have almost waived by our long indifference, we would thankfully accept of payment in moderate instalments. For some of the more abstruse writings of this great author are not very intelligible in the Greek, and are scarcely translatable at all into English; others which are intelligible have long ceased to have any interest, except as connected with the history of opinions and the development of philosophical systems; and, however important to the student in metaphysics or the historian of philosophy, will always be more readily and profitably consulted by such men in the original than they can be in any translation, however excellent.

But after making large deductions on this ground, there remains no inconsiderable portion which, whether we consider the value of the contents or the rare graces of the style, ought to make all nations, pretending to a literature, as anxious to possess them in the vernacular, and in a dress not wholly unworthy of the original, as any other of the masterpieces of classical antiquity. To all this part of the writings of Plato may be applied those proud words which Thucydides employs in

relation to his own history. They are 'the heritage of all posterity.'

Even considered simply as *unique* specimens of a very peculiar and transcendent species of literary genius, there are parts of his writings which deserve all the skill and taste which the most accomplished translator could possibly lavish on them. Plato is one of the very few prodigally gifted men the products of whose genius are as remarkable for their *form* as for their *matter*; characterised not only by great depth and great subtlety, but enriched and adorned with the most various and even contrasted species of literary beauty; as resplendent with the graces of taste, wit, and imagination, as they are distinguished by the traces of a profound, acute, and highly speculative mind. If those lines of Milton (himself an ardent student of Plato) in which he pronounces

' Divine Philosophy,  
Not harsh and rugged as dull fools suppose,  
But musical as is Apollo's lute,'

be ever true, they are surely so in relation to philosophy as it is found in the pages of the 'Master of the Academy.' In this point of view, indeed, Plato stands alone in the annals of philosophy. Many of his Dialogues are the only examples the world possesses of almost perfect success in one of the most difficult of all conceivable kinds of composition, and deserve, were it only for this reason, to be presented to our countrymen with every advantage which our language can supply. They offer one among many proofs of that inventive genius of ancient Greece, which at once discovered and carried to perfection nearly every species of composition, and which seemed to leave succeeding ages only models for imitation. In this point of view alone, some of the writings of Plato may be commended to the study of all time: and to leave them un-translated or ill-translated is to defraud the unlearned of much enjoyment, and the great author of part of that homage to which he has as rightful a claim as either Homer or Demosthenes.

While France and Germany can boast, that in each of these countries, one of their greatest scholars, in point of capacity, erudition, and philosophical acumen, has devoted himself to the translation of the entire works of Plato,—Victor Cousin in the one, and Schleiermacher in the other,—Britain has nothing of the kind to show. The German translation, indeed, was left incomplete, but so far as it goes it is allowed to be admirable. The only translation we possess of the entire works of Plato, is that published by the notorious Thomas Taylor: in which,

while incorporating the labours of previous translators, he has managed to mar them by his professed emendations, and to give the remainder in a form in which no reader of Plato could by possibility recognise the mutilated original. But a few words more of this by-and-by. As to translations of particular dialogues, it may be said that of the 'Immortal Trilogy' which immediately relates to the last scenes of the life of Socrates—the *Apology*, the *Crito* and the *Phædon*, creditable translations have appeared in recent times; but they have had but a very limited circulation. And beautiful as these dialogues are, they are far, very far, from exhibiting the phases of Plato's intellectual character in all their variety and richness. Of some other of the dialogues, and those among the most interesting, a translation, characterised by considerable fidelity and elegance, appeared from the pen of the unfortunate Floyer Sydenham, about a century ago.\* But the work was brought out in an expensive form, and has never, so far as we are aware, been republished. Even these, however, leave untouched several of Plato's greatest pieces, and such as are most durably valuable, whether regarded in a philosophical or literary point of view. We allude more particularly to the *Theætetus*, the *Gorgias*, and the *Protagoras*. Besides, these translations are far from being distinguished throughout by equal merit, and in many places fall short of that idiomatic grace, which a version of such an author, in order to do him justice, imperatively requires. A translator of Plato ought to be not merely competently skilled in Greek, but, still rarer qualification!—to be a great master of English.

But the book which has attracted most notice, because most accessible from its cheapness, is a version from the French of M. Dacier's 'Select Dialogues;' that is, it is a translation of a translation, in which the beauties of Plato are strained off by a double process. It was executed more than a hundred and twenty years ago, and is marked by innumerable negligencies, inaccuracies, and vulgarisms. It has, notwithstanding, been repeatedly reprinted, and only lately we saw it advertised with professed corrections from Sydenham and Taylor on the title-page. From Sydenham, indeed, corrections might have been supplied in abundance, but unhappily Sydenham never

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\* This translation comprised the *Io*, *Greater and Lesser Hippias*, *Banquet* (with the exception of the *Speech of Alcibiades*), *Rivals*, *Meno*, *First and Second Alcibiades*, and *Philebus*.—Of two of these (the *Io* and *Banquet*), many of our readers must have seen an elegant version among the posthumous works of Shelley.

translated any in this collection except the brief dialogues entitled the first and second Alcibiades; and from a collation of many passages of these dialogues as given in this edition, we can bear witness that the traces of any emendations or alterations from Sydenham, are slight indeed.

But as to Taylor—whose bulky five volumes are one continued slander on Plato's good name, both as a man of genius and a philosopher—the correcting of any other translation from *such* a source, can remind us only of certain economical methods we may sometimes see adopted among the poor, of mending a broken window by a stuffing of straw. Whatever else the straw may do, it at least does the very contrary of what a window ought to do: it effectually shuts out the light. It were as easy to correct a translation of the Bible by the light of the Koran of Mahomet, as to correct a translation of Plato by that of Taylor.

Taylor was certainly in many respects a remarkable man, but in nothing more so than in the whimsical delusion by which he supposed himself capable of translating Plato; except, perhaps, in his equal delusion that he was commissioned to do the same cruel office by Aristotle. We are not quite sure, indeed, that the former was not the more gigantic error of the two. In translating Aristotle, he could but totally demolish the philosopher; there were few graces of manner to destroy: in rendering Plato, he showed how possible it is for a translator at once to obscure the sense and annihilate the elegance of even the greatest genius; and suffering all the ethereal qualities to evaporate, to reduce the rich and perfumed leaves which he had consigned to so remorseless a distillation, to a fetid and miserable *caput mortuum*. His splendid quarto title-page, promising us the entire 'Works of Plato,' is but like the brilliant plate on a coffin lid; it is after all only the corpse of Plato which lies within; and that too in a very advanced stage of decomposition.

In an early volume\* of this journal, will be found some strange specimens of Taylor's blunders and inelegancies, especially in his translation of the Protagoras. The critic remarks that he could have adduced equal enormities from that of the Theætetus. Though he has not cited them, we can fully substantiate his assertion. From a multitude of others which we had noted, we will amuse the reader with two, both occurring within the limits of a couple of pages. In the eloquent description which Socrates gives of the contrasted characters of the true philosopher, and the keen, sharp, but contracted 'little soul' formed by early and incessant practice in legal chicaneries, he remarks,

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\* Ed. Review, vol. xiv.

‘that those who from their youth up have been versed in the law courts, stand a chance of appearing, in comparison with those who have been educated in philosophy and in like liberal pursuits, much as slaves compared with the free born.’ Plato here uses the word *κυλινδούμενοι*, the root of which literally means ‘to roll round,’ and in a secondary sense was sometimes employed much like the Latin *versor*, to ‘be busied about.’ Mr. Taylor gives the following exquisite translation:—‘Those who from their youth have been *rolled like cylinders* in courts of justice,’ &c.; a version not much more scholarlike or graceful than if some one, wishing to translate out of English such a phrase as ‘those who write a good round hand,’ should express himself in terms which literally translated back again should be, ‘those whose handwriting is like unto spheres.’ Mr. Taylor is so delighted with the image which his rendering of the word presents, that he has repeated it in both the *Sophistes* and *Politicus*. Our other instance is equally ludicrous:—Socrates having commented with severity on certain opinions of the deceased Protagoras, Theodorus, who had been a friend of his, says, ‘We are running my associate hard, Socrates.’ Socrates replies, in his ironical way, ‘But then, my friend, it is not clear whether we are not missing the truth while so doing. It is indeed probable that, being older, he was also wiser than we are; and if he could just now raise his head above-ground as far as the shoulders, he would very probably reprove us both;—me for uttering much nonsense, and you for assenting to it, and then vanish below again.’ Taylor says, ‘If suddenly leaping forth, he should *seize me by the shoulders*, it is probable that he would prove me delirious in many things,’ &c.

Such blunders, and they are of perpetual occurrence, alternately move a reader acquainted with the original to mirth and indignation; while those who know Plato in no other form, must certainly think him the most unintelligible and inelegant of writers.\*

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\* The words *εἰρήμει δ' ἄνθρωπε*, which in English would be tantamount to ‘hush! my friend,’ or ‘good words, I beseech you!’ Mr. Taylor perpetually translates by ‘predict better things, O man!’ For the words *δ' δαυμάσιε, δ' βέλτιστε*, he can find no more idiomatic equivalent than ‘O wonderful man!’ and ‘O best of men!’ while *δ' δαιμόνιε* is grotesquely rendered ‘O demoniacal man!’

Even where the meaning could hardly have been missed by him, it is incredible with what odd perversity he manages to render it utterly unintelligible to the English reader. ‘Since you inherit none of your father’s property,’—says Socrates to Hermogenes in the *Cratylus*;

Taylor, who must have been by nature of an eccentrically constructed mind, further muddled himself with deep draughts of the philosophy of the Alexandrian school of commentators, some of whom have done by Plato what so many of their brethren did by the Scriptures; and by the extravagancies of a mystical and allegorical system of interpretation, have succeeded at times in making the greatest of Greek philosophers almost as nonsensical as themselves. Under grandiloquent nothings, they too often imagined they were giving utterance to oracles of super-human wisdom. Taylor was just the man to be easily intoxicated with their heady liquor, and forthwith mistook his intellectual drunkenness for veritable inspiration. The wildest vagaries of this allegorical school he hesitates not to follow, not only with obsequiousness but with rapture. Hundreds of pages has he written or translated in the shape of notes and commentary, on whose fatuous face not a gleam of intelligence is seen, to play, and to which it is impossible to imagine that he could have himself attached any definite meaning whatever.

Difficult as it may seem at first sight to believe, the history of philosophy and every-day observation compel us to admit that there is a class of persons who imagine that whatever is obscure is profound; and who love the notion and reputation of depth so much that they prefer a muddy stream, however shallow, to a clear one, however deep. To such minds, mere sounds, if they seem to convey something grand or mysterious, are a source of delight; and with them words, which, in the language of Hobbes, are the counters of wise men and the money of fools, pass from hand to hand, or rather from mouth to mouth, as a trustworthy symbol of value.

Mere English readers are entitled to the means of knowing something more of Plato than they can learn from Taylor; and one of our chief objects on this occasion has been to help forward

this Mr. Taylor translates, 'since you have no authority in paternal matters!'

It is droll to hear Taylor saying that he had adopted Sydenham's translation and notes, as far as that writer's want of a 'more profound knowledge of Plato's philosophy' would permit; and equally droll to hear him blaming Spens' translation of the Republic for its Scotticisms and inelegancies! His knowledge of Greek, even as a language, was not sufficient to protect him from the indignity of occasionally making his translation from the Latin! while, upon his boasting that he knew not a word of any modern language except his mother tongue, our former critic generously offered, if it would add to his glory to be reckoned ignorant of that too, to bear testimony that his knowledge of it was abundantly scanty.



so desirable an end, by showing what are the most prominent features of universal interest in his writings, and what especially the chief characteristics of his literary genius.

For the learned, indeed, various profound questions as to the philosophical system of Plato, will always have their just attraction. What that system precisely was, especially in its abstruser doctrines; what was the progress of its development in Plato's own mind; how far it was a consistent fabric, or a pile of heterogeneous materials and varying orders of architecture; whether any such harmonious system can now be elicited from his writings, and how far, and in what respects he is inconsistent with himself; what was the one design which so many critics affirm he had in view in the entire series of, at least, his principal productions, and what their mutual coherence and succession, regarded in that light; and, again, what was the historical order\* of their composition, and which of the works attributed to him are spurious, and which authentic; — these questions, and others like them, will probably form an everlasting source of *νικτομαχία* to the learned; and, in truth, they have been eagerly discussed, especially by our German neighbours, with abundance of erudition and ingenuity; sometimes, too, with a degree of passion, and sometimes with a tone of confidence, which oddly contrast with the shadowy nature of the interests at stake, and the uncertainty and perplexity of the points in debate. But a large portion of the writings of Plato possess an interest wholly independent of the decision of any or of all such questions, and will continue to charm every intelligent reader, in whatever way these problems may be decided.

From the extent to which these profounder questions are pursued in many works on Plato, a reader unacquainted with the original would hardly conceive to how large a proportion of his remains our last remark applies. 'That the dialogues 'of Plato,' says Professor Brundis†, 'were from first to last not

\* A curious example of the precariousness of the reasoning on such subjects may be seen in a note of Stollbaum on the *Phædrus* (p. 257. B.), in which, by a single remark, he at once neutralises some of the refined arguments of Van Heusde and Schleiermacher, adduced to prove (true though the theory most probably is on other grounds) that the *Phædrus* was an early composition of Plato. Gray adopts the supposition that it was his first Dialogue.

† **ART. PLATO.** Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology. Edited by W. Smith, LL. D. The articles in both these dictionaries are in general most ably executed. If we were to take exception to any of the biographical ones, it would be to two or three

‘intended to set before any one, distinct assertions, but to place the objects in their opposite points of view, could appear credible only to partisans of the more modern sceptical academy.’ In this we fully agree : only let it be acknowledged how much there is that is intelligible and delightful, apart from the solution of this problem. The difficulty of the problem, Professor Brandis himself admits ; ‘It is impossible,’ says he, ‘not to feel the difficulty of rendering to one’s self a distinct account of what is designed and accomplished in any particular dialogue, and of its connection with others.’ Therefore, while we believe that Plato was not without his systematic purpose, we yet must concede to Mr. Lewes, (though he, perhaps, states the objection rather too strongly,) that few writers are chargeable with more frequent inconsistencies ; inconsistencies very natural, indeed, in the gradual development of opinions, slowly matured and variously expressed in the course of a long career, but incapable, like most contrarieties, of being kneaded into any harmonious system. It

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in which the editor has deemed it necessary to resort to foreign aid. We must confess that on his list of contributors there are those who, for the *English* public, would in our judgment have executed the task much more advantageously. The articles we more particularly refer to are those on Aristotle and Plato, the one by Professor Stahr, and the other by Professor Brandis. Of the profound acquaintance of these eminent scholars with the authors of whom they treat, there can be no doubt ; and we have good ground to confide in the accuracy and fidelity of the translator Mr. C. P. Mason. There is also, we gladly admit, much interesting matter in the account of the life and writings of these eminent philosophers ; yet when we come to their philosophy, we somehow find the subject involved in mists which we cannot help attributing in part to the foreign medium through which it is presented to us. The whole mode of employing language on philosophical subjects is so different among our German neighbours, — we say nothing at all of their superiority or inferiority in this respect, — that translations from them are almost always vague and unsatisfactory ; even where the meaning is at last understood, the tedium of expression excites perpetual irritation. Where great abstruseness of thought is superadded to the ‘langweiligkeit’ of style, we are reminded of a journey through an American forest, jolting along in a cart without springs, over a corduroy road, and surrounded by umbrageous depths which the eye in vain strives to penetrate. These remarks apply with special force to Mr. Dobson’s translation of Schleiermacher’s ‘Introductions to the Dialogues of Plato.’ From a comparison of several passages with the original, we have no reason to doubt either the skill or fidelity of the translator : yet we will venture to say, that the book is one of the most wearisome to read in the English language.

is probable too, that, in attempting to harmonise his system, due allowance has not always been made for the latitude which Plato may have permitted to the dramatic form of his dialogues. Critics who have not united the requisite aptitudes for philosophical discussion with an exact appreciation of the beauties of a most refined species of composition, have sometimes supposed him to be serious where he was only playful, and have tortured themselves and him to discover his consistency. In particular, as Stallbaum\*, one of the clearest and most instructive of his commentators, observes, the very covert irony of the Platonic Socrates, which is sometimes grave enough to deceive even the most astute, has now and then imposed on erudite simplicity. What was thus only a grave joke has been transformed into a truly laughable wisdom, and a defect of refinement and taste has become an error in the interpretation of philosophy. At all events, if Socrates could but have foreseen all the platitudes which the Alexandrian commentators have uttered on the mysteries couched under some of his delicate satire, an involuntary chuckle must have been heard from behind his mask.

On one of the above mentioned questions, — the authenticity or spuriousness of certain dialogues, we may be pardoned for offering two or three general remarks. The boldness with which German scholarship pronounces certain writings of Plato spurious would be amusing if it were not so provoking. Ast, Socher, Ritter, Schleiermacher, all reject, or hesitate to receive, some dialogues, (though happily they are not quite agreed among themselves *which* they are to reject,) pronounced authentic by the utmost possible strength of external evidence, and which they suspect to be spurious, simply on account of their *conjecture* that there is something in the internal evidence inconsistent with what they have *conjectured* must have been the design of Plato in the development of his entire system of philosophy; or again, because they observe some inferiority in the literary execution. As to the first objection, their own serious differences of view (however felicitous some of their hypotheses) ought to have convinced them of the extreme precariousness of such grounds. As to the second, we may well say with Mr. Lewis, 'What writer is at all times equal to the highest of his own flights? What author has produced nothing but *chefs-d'œuvre*? Are there not times when the most brilliant men are dull, when the richest style is meagre, when the compactest style is loose? The same subjects will not always call forth the same excellence; how unlikely, then, that various subjects should

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\* See particularly *Prefatio ad Protagoram*, pp. 1, 2.

'be treated with uniform power? The "Theages" could hardly equal the "Theætetus;" the "Euthydemus" must be inferior to the "Gorgias." No one thinks of disputing Shakspeare's claim to the "Merry Wives of Windsor," because it is immeasurably inferior to "Twelfth Night," which in its turn is inferior to "Othello."

There is not one of these suspected dialogues, which it would be more unreasonable to reject than the Greater Hippias. Not only is there no external evidence against it, but, except from the fantastical reason that it contributes nothing to the development of some assumed system of Plato's philosophy, all the internal evidences of manner, style, and the happiest dramatic vivacity, are most conspicuously in its favour. Schleiermacher, while he states his doubts in one page, pleasantly does his best to answer them in the next. Having contended that the irony is ruder and less delicate than that of Plato in general, he yet admits that there is 'abundance of pleasantry' in the composition, and that if we fully knew the circumstances and design of it, we should probably see much more of its beauty. Meanwhile, we confess it seems to us that enough is apparent even now to betray the genuine manner of Plato. The question discussed in it is one of the most subtle and difficult in the whole field of intellectual criticism; that is, the essence of the beautiful, or what it is which makes us denominate so immense a variety of objects by that one epithet: a question which has, perhaps, not even yet been solved to the full satisfaction of every one, and which it is no more wonderful that Plato should have left undetermined in this Dialogue, than that he should have left equal difficulties at the close of the Theætetus without any positive solution. The erroneous theories he confutes are, some of them, not very dissimilar to those which have been so often repeated in modern times. The first answers of Hippias, till he comes fully to understand the nature of the question, are not much more absurd, (absurd though they are,) than might be expected from one who is, by implication, represented as a total stranger to metaphysical niceties\*, and who has been principally engaged in the study of mythological antiquities, and such like 'old wives' fables,' as Socrates himself hints.† Nay, they are not much

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\* 'Does not the proposer of the question,' says Hippias, when Socrates has stated it in the person of his imaginary objector, 'desire to have it told him what is beautiful?'—'I think not, Hippias,' says Socrates, 'but to have it told him *what the beautiful is.*' Hippias cannot see the difference.

† 'I perceive,' says Socrates, after Hippias has been boasting of

more absurd than the answers which no mean men of modern times have given to the same question, when vainly searching for the beautiful in some one class of material forms or qualities; — not much more absurd than that of Burke, who found diminutiveness essential to beauty, or that of Hogarth, who found its essence in a certain curve.

To reject ancient writings on the frivolous internal evidence upon which a German scholar often depends, would require the critic to possess a tact not less delicate than that which enabled a certain conjurer to detect the recent presence of spirits by the *odour* which they had left behind them; or that which distinguished the two renowned ancestors of Sancho Panza in the matter of wine, who being requested to pronounce judgment on a full cask, decided, — one of them, that it had a slight tang of iron, and the other, that it had a tang of leather. On emptying the cask, the wisdom of both was justified, for there was found at the bottom an iron key with a leathern thong attached to it!

But we must resume. — Plato's metaphysical system, let it be ever so successfully illustrated or restored, can be of interest only to the scholar or the scientific antiquary, as marking an epoch or supplying a link in the historical development of philosophy. It is among the things that have been; it has not now a single follower, and will probably never have another, unless now and then some Thomas Taylor should return once in the long revolution of a Platonic year. Plato's archetypal ideas, his metempsychosis, his cosmology, his doctrines of the pre-existence of the human soul, and that all our knowledge is but reminiscence — these and other related dogmas have gone the way of so many other philosophies.

It is sometimes said, indeed, that, even in the construction of such an adventurous system, Plato was prompted by the severity of his dialectics, while others have represented it as the exuberance of a rich poetic fancy. 'It is a mistake,' says Mr. Lewes, speaking of Plato's doctrine of reminiscence, 'to suppose this a mere poetical conception. Plato never sacrifices logic to poetry. If he sometimes calls poetry to his aid, it is only to express by it those ideas which logic cannot grasp, ideas which are beyond demonstration; but he never indulges in mere fancies.' — There is a sense in which both of these statements are true enough.

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the interest with which the Lacedæmonian youth had listened to his 'old-would' stories, 'I perceive why they were so delighted with you, — you were of the same use to them as old women are to children — to amuse them with pretty fables; πρὸς τὸ ἡδέως μυθεῖσθαι.'

Perplexed, like so many other philosophers, to account for the origin of knowledge and the formation of general ideas, it may be said that his logical subtlety led him to frame the theory of archetypal ideas, and the doctrine of reminiscence, as the sufficient solution ; but it is not less true that imagination supplied his logic with the materials ; or that his speculations involved just as much difficulty in their proof as the solution of the mysteries they were designed to remove. All such gratuitous theories for intractable phenomena are but the repetition of the Hindoo cosmogony ; and when we have got the world on the elephant's back, and the elephant on the tortoise, we still need something for the tortoise to rest upon. Philosophers are but too apt to forget, when they make hypotheses for difficult cases, under the stress of *such* logical necessities, that a truer logic would teach them that when they have arrived at phenomena for which they have no other solution than fanciful assumptions, they had better leave them alone. In the same sense—and the same apology has been made for them—Descartes was led by his *logic* to his vortices, and Leibnitz to his monads ; but it was imagination, rather than logic, which handed them their materials. For our own parts, we would just as soon rest in a mystery which nature and fact have made for us, as feel ourselves obliged to rest a little farther on in one, which any such supposed logic has gratuitously created. There is no lack of instances of the use of hypothesis in science. On the other hand, the abuse of hypothesis formed its history for ages ; and in all such cases, it would be a waste of time and labour not to stop at A, if after one doubtful step through equal darkness we are still obliged to stop at B.

But it must not be supposed that there are not portions of Plato's philosophy, which, though involving, in the sense which Plato meant them to convey, some of the above fantastical dogmas, may be even now perused by the general student with signal advantage ; that is,—his reasonings in many cases simply involve more than the truth, not what is contrary to it, and are not, therefore, vitiated by the residuum of error which we reject. For example, and by way of explaining our meaning, it has been very truly observed that Plato's 'archetypal ideas' correspond to our 'general notions' as expressed by 'general terms,' and *something more* ; that is, he believed in their real existence, somewhere or other in the universe, external to any and to all minds. Now nothing in Plato is more remarkable than the ingenious and exhaustive induction by which he seeks (as he is fond of expressing it), 'The one in the many,' or the essence of that which we find existing in many different forms, species,

and individuals, till he has discovered it in the most comprehensive genus and under the true limitations; nor do these admirable specimens of the investigation of general truth lose one particle of their beauty or cogency because Plato believed in the independent existence of ideas, and they may still be read as among the earliest and most striking models of a genuine method of philosophising. If we could name the quality by which we denominate all objects 'beautiful' that are ever denominated so, it is manifest that it matters little to us that Plato thinks there is 'an archetypal beauty' external to our minds, and subsisting as an independent existence.—And, apart from the positive results of such investigations, they may have been of infinite service as instructive illustrations of a certain *method*.

But neither is this all of what science owes to this part of the writings of Plato, considered in a purely philosophical point of view. If the 'method' be of greater value than the *positive* results, yet the *negative* results are often of the highest importance. Few have been more frequently triumphant in the exposure of the errors and sophistries of others. It may be humiliating to admit it, but it is not less a fact, that metaphysicians have in general been more potent to confute error than to establish truth. They have had more success in demolishing empires than in erecting them: and in this they only share the fate of other conquerors, of most of whom it may be said that the gigantic ruins of the cities they have destroyed still strew the plain, as memorials of their power, long after every trace of their own dynasties has passed away. The confutation of error can never, however, be thought a slight achievement; so long, alas, as it shall continue to be true, that a great part of human wisdom consists in unlearning the delusions, or guarding against the influence of human folly. It is difficult to overrate the services of Plato in this particular. In the *Theætetus*, for example, the masterly reasonings by which he has refuted so many shallow bases of science, and especially that too pleasant sophism of Protagoras—that the senses are our only guide,—that truth is what each individual thinks or feels it, or, in the sophist's language, that 'man is the measure of all things,'—can never be read without profit and admiration; nor, negative as the conclusions are, would we exchange them for a 'whole wilderness' of theories like that of archetypal ideas.

•It is well said by a recent writer, 'As Sir C. Wren gained 'nearly as much credit for the scientific manner in which he 'removed the ruins of the old St. Paul's Church as for the 'genius and skill with which he planned and constructed the

‘new edifice, so Plato should receive the commendation which is due to him for the elaborate and searching scrutiny to which he subjected the erroneous views current in his time, before he ventured to propound the grand and original conceptions on which his own philosophy was built up.’\*

But it is on his speculations in *moral* science, after all, that Plato’s claims, as a philosopher, to the gratitude of mankind, principally rest. To the believer in a yet purer and nobler system of ethics, his system must always possess peculiar and transcendent interest, as affording (in conjunction with the ethics of Aristotle) a standard or gauge of the highest and sublimest pitch to which the unaided intellect of man can aspire on these subjects. But independently of this, we do not think it possible for any one to dwell on his impassioned admiration and sublime and glowing delineations of the morally fair and beautiful, without being in some degree infected with his ennobling enthusiasm, in accordance with that law by which we become more or less assimilated to the image of whatever is the habitual object of our delighted contemplation. Can literature and philosophy have higher praise, than that no author has left us more intense and vivid pictures of ideal virtue, or seems more enamoured as he gazes on them, or is more likely to inspire his readers with his own elevated sentiments? that there is no one who has explored more profoundly the anatomy of man’s moral nature, or laid bare more skillfully that spiritual mechanism by which, wholly apart from their grosser and external effects, virtue and vice operate of themselves on man’s happiness or misery? no one in whose pages moral truth is so variously or beautifully illustrated? no one who, in the expression of moral formulas, has approached nearer or so near the very words of the Gospel?†

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\* Penny Cyclopædia. PLATO; an article necessarily brief, but which will well repay perusal.

† Next to Homer and the inspired Hebrew poets, no author exercised a more powerful influence on the congenial sublimity of Milton’s genius than Plato. Often in his poetry, but still oftener in his prose writings, is that influence conspicuously reflected. Both authors attain, perhaps more frequently than almost any others, that highest species of sublimity—the *moral* sublime; arresting and transfixing the soul by the naked majesty of lofty sentiments and purely spiritual abstractions, and readily dispensing with material and palpable images. It is in such lines as those in which Milton speaks of ‘the thoughts that wander through eternity,’ or of ‘the mind as its ‘own place,’ which ‘makes a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven,’ that his muse soars to the highest pitch, and in which he truly ‘unspheres ‘the spirit of Plato.’ Milton was keenly alive to the beauty of the



‘His object,’ says Sir James Mackintosh, ‘is to inspire the love of truth, of wisdom, of beauty (especially of goodness, the highest beauty), and of that supreme and eternal mind, which contains all truth and wisdom, all beauty and goodness. . . . He enforced these lessons by an inexhaustible variety of just and beautiful illustrations, — sometimes striking from their familiarity, sometimes subduing by their grandeur, — and his works are the storehouse from which moralists have, from age to age, borrowed the means of rendering moral instruction easier and more delightful.’

It has been said, by way of objection, that the ethics of Plato are too elevated and transcendental for humanity; that they are founded, ‘not on a principle of obligation, on the definition of duty, but on the tendency to perfection.’ Now, while there is something in this, and while there would be more, in case Plato had assigned moral excellence *no* other supports than those derived from such motives, yet, among the various influences under which human character is formed, surely the views which he has opened, and the motives which he has appealed to, are entitled to all but the highest place. The contemplation of a perfection, which humanity can never reach, is not without its benefit: the reflected image, though paler than the light which produces it, will be still *in proportion* to its brightness.

outward world — like ‘the blind old man of Scio’s rocky isle,’ — and, Puritan though he was, as much so to the fascinating associations connected with ecclesiastical architecture. Yet it was not this which made him the sublimest of all poets, but the far rarer power, by which his imagination excelled in clothing principles of the simplest and severest character with all the grandeur of the most impressive eloquence, or the most splendid poetry. He who will read his wonderful description of the ‘true office’ of a Christian minister, in book ii. chap. 3. of the ‘Reason of Church Government urged against ‘Prelacy,’ or of ‘Excommunication,’ both there and in the 2nd book of ‘Reformation in England,’ will readily concede this. Plato and Milton seem to have been alike in another respect, — in their defects as well as in their excellencies. For both have shown themselves incapable of perceiving any thing but the truth of ultimate principles and the most comprehensive generalizations in morals, or of discerning the ‘refractions’ and deviations (as Burke would say) to which abstract principles are subject when they enter this atmosphere of earth; both were alike destitute of that practical sagacity which knows how to apply ethics to politics in our work-a-day world. In this point of view, ‘The Doctrine of Divorce,’ and the scheme of ‘Education,’ will stand about on the same level with Plato’s most Utopian of all republics.

Addison's illustration of the asymptote, always approaching its curve, though never touching it, would still be realised. But, in truth, the objection, as above stated, is too general: Plato does not confine himself to any *one* topic of persuasion, although unquestionably an abstract tendency to perfection is a favourite theme with him—as we think it ought to be. 'Perhaps,' says Sir James Mackintosh, after speaking of the various illustrations by which he represented virtue, 'in every one of these, an eye, trained in the history of ethics, may discover the gerin of the whole or of a part of some subsequent theory. But to examine it thus, would not be to look at it with the eye of Plato. His aim was as practical as that of Socrates. He employed every topic—without regard to its place in a system, or even always to its force as an argument—which could attract the small portion of the community then accessible to cultivation: who, it should not be forgotten, had no moral instructor but the philosopher, unaided, if not thwarted, by the reigning superstition; for religion had not then, besides her own discoveries, brought down the most awful and the most beautiful forms of moral truth to the humblest station in human society.'

Nor must it, in justice, be forgotten, that no one has insisted more urgently on the coincidence, the indissoluble alliance, between virtue and happiness. In this, as Mackintosh has observed, there is no real discrepancy between Plato and Aristotle. 'Neither distinguished the elements, which they represented as constituting the supreme good, from each other, partly, perhaps, from a fear of appearing to separate them.' But, he adds with admirable discrimination, 'Plato more habitually considered happiness as the natural fruit of virtue; Aristotle oftener viewed virtue as the means of attaining happiness.' Nor is this an unimportant distinction—and, as far as it goes, it is to Plato's advantage; for, though the infirmity of human nature requires to be 'undergirded' by all sorts of supports, and we would not, therefore, withdraw one of them, it is not of little moment whether the calculation of interest or the appreciation of the morally fair and beautiful has the habitual ascendancy in our thoughts; it cannot be the same to our moral nature, whether our eye constantly dwells delighted on that fat and fertile soil through which the stream of virtuous action flows, and which it so prosperously irrigates, or on the transparent and beautiful stream itself. Let but a man always think that he is to do nothing but what is for his interest, however true it may be in the long run and on the great scale, yet that ever-present thought will narrow his mind to selfishness. The further question,—whether the perception of moral distinctions be

natural or acquired, — is, for our present purpose, comparatively immaterial: it is sufficient, however deduced, that it exists.

Plato not simply imbibed the lofty ethical spirit and maxims of his master, but when he descants on such themes, he surrounds them with a halo of eloquence, which his master was incapable of imparting to them. Yet there is another characteristic of his practical ethics still more striking than their eloquence: it is the astonishing decision, as well as sublimity, of his principles, and their close approximation to the evangelical modes of expression. Whatever may be the assumptions and extravagancies of his physics, and the obscurities and mysteries of his metaphysics, or however visionary the character of his political speculations, the great principles of his ethical system are clear as the light, and as sublime as they are intelligible. Nay, it is not unworthy of remark, that while in his profound impression of the ignorance of human nature, he has so often refrained from a dogmatical assertion of his opinions; while his dialogues on metaphysical and critical subjects sometimes seem little more than the play of an ingenious and highly subtle intellect, and contain more frequently refutations of the errors of others, or hints for the adjustment of apparently conflicting truths, than the establishment of any positive doctrines of his own; while his Socrates perpetually professes that he asserts nothing, but merely examines the opinions of others, and in that natural process of investigation, avows that in confuting others, he has also sometimes confuted himself, or, as in the *Protagoras*, finds that he has changed sides with his opponent; while these are so frequently the characteristics of Plato's manner, that he has even been unjustly considered by many as the patron of scepticism, it is singular that on those *practical* questions of morals, in which, in the absence of revelation, there was just as much speculative difficulty, and a still greater danger of an erroneous bias from the influence of selfishness and passion, Plato is as firm as a rock, and invariably takes the nobler side. In spite of the apparent perplexities of the moral administration of the universe, in spite of the frequent spectacle of prosperous iniquity and oppressed virtue, it is sufficient for him to discern the *tendencies* of those great laws, to which their full development is not at present accorded; and he declares the certainty of their ultimate triumph in opposition to every doubt in his own breast, and every plausible but narrow theory issuing from minds less lofty than his own. That 'might can never constitute right,' — whatever creed might be shamelessly avowed by some of the speakers in his dialogues, and might be welcome to the vanity and

ambition of many a young Athenian; that perfect virtue is the highest element of happiness, and would, if possessed, assuredly secure it; that the morally wrong can never be the truly expedient; that the good and the beautiful cannot be severed; that it is always, and under all circumstances, better 'to suffer an injury than to do one;' that even the most successful crime is but a splendid misery, and involves, by inevitable necessity, in the remorse it awakens and the passions it nurtures, its own invisible but infallible avengers; that only he is a virtuous man who acts as virtue bids him, even though he could be assured that neither detection nor punishment awaited his crimes, and that he might commit them under the privilege of the ring of Gyges; 'that virtue is herself the soul's best recompense,' though it is true that all meaner felicities swell the pomp of her retinue;—these maxims he often proclaims with an authority as undoubting as if no plausible theories (so natural in the absence of a better revelation than the ordinary course of this world can supply) might be urged against them; nay, with a courage and commanding greatness which might well put to the blush many professed theorists in ethics, who have enjoyed a light for which Socrates and Plato could only wait and hope.

And in the same manner, in relation to the kindred questions,—on a satisfactory solution of which the truth and consistency of the lofty moral maxims, just adverted to, so much depend,—on the immortality of the soul, and a future state of retribution, Plato, if not quite free from those fluctuations of feeling and opinion which were unavoidable to a deeply reflecting mind and especially a heathen mind, is yet far more decisive than any preceding philosopher, and uniformly favourable to the more sublime and elevated view. Yielding in these cases to a noble instinct, rather than trusting to the hesitation and caution of a subtle but inadequate reason; supplying the defects of argument by a faith that that *must* be true, which it would be ignominy to think false, he teaches those doctrines which a nature worthy of immortality would wish to be proved, even if it could not fully prove them, and strains every nerve to grapple with the difficulties which scepticism is so well content to leave unsolved.\*

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\* How near do the following sentences come to certain Scriptural expressions:—'We must then suppose of the righteous man, that though he may be in poverty, in sickness, or any other *seeming* evil, yet to him these things will terminate in some good—living or dead. For it cannot be, that he who ardently desires to be a just man, and, by the cultivation of virtue, to resemble the Deity as far as humanity will permit, can ever be uncared for by

Imprisoned like the rest of his species in that dark cave in which he represents the human race as lying bound, perceiving only the images and shadows of realities, and forming imperfect guesses of their nature and relations, he turns his eyes eagerly towards the light, and longs to climb the steep ascent to a more perfect day. The contrast between the buoyant and confident spirit of the Platonic Socrates when treating of these subjects, and the cautious not to say sceptical tone, which he so often adopts on others, is certainly surprising, and, we do not think, has been sufficiently observed.

The feature now referred to must be admitted to constitute a singular merit. To us, indeed, indulged with a better guide than his philosophy, the truths he uttered may sound elementary; though who among modern writers could have illustrated them with the eloquence of Plato? But in that twilight in which he speculated, amidst the frequent doubts even of those who might in general sympathise with his hopes and aspirations, and amidst the incessant, plausible, and practical denial of these truths on the part of all who wished them false, his conclusions show a vast comprehensiveness and elevation of mind; and entitle him to that appellation, which one of our greatest British divines hesitates not to bestow upon him, of the 'great pagan theologuc.'

It has been remarked by Mr. Macaulay, in his essay on Bacon, that the inductive philosophy is favourably distinguished from that of the ancients, inasmuch as it is a *fruitful* philosophy; — fruitful of useful discoveries and important practical results in every department of science; — while that of the ancient world was generally barren, occupied either with useless subtleties and logomachies, or exhausting itself on questions which are totally beyond the province of the human faculties; in the pursuit of which the ancient philosopher too often even contemptuously looked down on that humble office of interpreting nature, in which Bacon places the sum of philosophy. The remark is just, and the conclusion in favour of Bacon's philosophy incontestable; nor, so far as time was consumed in profitless and idle subtleties, can even an apology be offered in behalf of the ancients. For any thing one can see, it would unquestionably have been wiser to have spent

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'the Gods.'—*Republic*, Lib. 10. It is a sentiment he frequently gives expression to. Nor less philosophical than beautiful is that declaration in the tenth book of the 'Laws,' by which Bolingbroke might have learned something of the real proportions of spiritual things, 'That probably it were no difficult thing to demonstrate that 'the Gods are as mindful of the minute as of the vast.'

in examining the phenomena of the material world the time and mental energy which were wasted in vainly devising theories of metaphysics; but in relation to the questions which turned on the destinies of man, and the theory of morals, who can wonder that, in the absence of an authoritative guide, the human mind was irresistibly attracted to perpetual meditation on such themes? Such is their tremendous importance (however solved) in the eye of any man who deserves the title of a *thinking* being, that it is surely no wonder that the most acute and inquisitive understandings — that is, those which were abstractedly the best fitted for the investigations of science — should have been absolutely fascinated and rivetted by them; or that they could hardly persuade themselves that they could have leisure for any purely material studies, till they had attained something like certainty on points of incomparably higher moment. Little as the multitude may have felt these things, there must have been many powerful minds who, as they questioned the mute oracles of nature — mute, we mean, on such points — must have been ready to exclaim, in the sublime words of Pascal, ‘*Le silence éternel de ces espaces infinis m’effraie.*’ Nor is it, perhaps, among the least of our incidental obligations to that Book in which so many myriads have found repose from the ceaseless questions which must often have agitated the greatest sages of antiquity, that so large a portion of the highest intellect of our race — the intellect of a Bacon, a Newton, a Pascal, a Locke — has, *in fact*, accepted its decisions on those questions, and thus been free to pursue the path of science within the limits and in the direction, in which alone human science can be successfully prosecuted.

But neither have we yet stated all Plato’s claims to some place in the vernacular literature of all civilised nations.

To the generality of readers, large fragments of the Platonic writings possess an interest quite separate from the merits or faults of Plato’s positive philosophy, and even from his success or failure in his mode of treating the particular subjects of the several dialogues. That interest consists not in the formal instructions given, nor in the continuity with which some one subject is pursued, but in a great measure in the incidental topics so gracefully introduced, and in the general charm and sweetness of the composition; in striking apophthegms of moral wisdom, and the beautiful images which embellish them; in the lively illustrations which his reasonings perpetually derive from historic fact and poetic fiction; in original and profound reflections on human nature, most happily expressed; in accurate and vivid sketches of individual character,

or of classes of men, who still have their types among all nations; in his felicitous scenic descriptions, his animated dialogue, and rare literary beauties of every kind. Mr. Lewes has remarked of the Republic, that 'by reducing it to its theoretical formula, we are doubtless viewing it in its most unfavourable light. Its value and its interest do not consist in its political ideas, but in its collateral ideas on education, religion, and morals.' This is equally true of most of his other productions. They abound in beauties which will not fade with the speculations with which they are intermingled, and may be appreciated by persons who care nothing for the philosophy of the author, or, indeed, very little for any other philosophy.

The sublime manner in which Plato announces and proves the great paradox in the Gorgias, that to do an injury is the greatest of evils; and that equal paradox, that he who commits crime with impunity is a yet more pitiable object than he who is punished for it, inasmuch as punishment is the appropriate medicine of the soul, and may reclaim it;—the impressive declaration which Tacitus has vouched and verified, that if we could but see the heart of a tyrant we should behold it torn and tormented by its own avenging passions: or that opposite picture of the all-entrancing loveliness of virtue, 'if she could but be seen;'—the striking reply to Agathon, when the latter said that he could not dispute against Socrates, 'You are not able, my Agathon, to argue against the truth, for to argue against Socrates is nothing difficult;'—the beautiful description of a contented old age, in the first book of the Republic, where the venerable Cephalus, in reply to Socrates' question as to how he finds the road which his younger companions must travel after him, avows that he feels, in freedom from the dominion of the passions, a sufficient compensation for the loss of their pleasures;—the apposite warning in the Protagoras to the eager candidate for the dangerous privilege of a sophist's instructions, that we ought to be much more cautious in the purchase of mental than bodily aliment, inasmuch as science cannot be carried away in any material vessel, and examined afterwards, but must be taken home in the soul itself, so that the purchaser goes away with his blessing or his curse cleaving to him;—the scene in the same magnificent Dialogue, in which the pompous sophist is represented as declaiming while he walks in the porch of Callias, accompanied by the troop of youths who followed him from all parts of Greece, 'charmed by his voice as if he had been another Orpheus,' and who, as he reaches the end of his walk, divide promptly to the right and left, and obsequiously form again in his rear;—

the profound moral anatomy in parts of the *Philebus*, in which Plato reasons on man's chief good, and shows that neither pleasure nor intellect — 'the vase of honey' nor 'the vase of cold but healthful water' — is sufficient to constitute it; — the communings of Socrates with his internal self, (represented at the close of the *Hippias Major*) when he returns home to night and solitude, self-accused for the inflation of supposed knowledge into which he might have been betrayed during the day; — the beautiful myth of the charioteer and his ill-yoked steeds, by which Plato shadows forth, in the *Phædrus*, the contest between the intellect and the passions, or that, again, in the *Gorgias*, by which he introduces the doctrine of future retribution, when the soul itself is to come before the incorruptible tribunal, 'unclothed' of all the adventitious things which now disturb our judgment; — his assertion, in the same place, of the perpetuity in that future state of the moral habits acquired now, and that the traces of evil passions remain in the soul, like scars of ignominy on the body; — the 'ravishing description' of Socrates and *Phædrus* loitering during the heat of the summer noon on the banks of the 'cool Ilissus,' where we seem to hear, (so musical its eloquence), the whisper of the wind in the plane-tree and through the long grass, and the murmuring of the brook, and the chirping of the grasshoppers, 'summer-like and shrill;' — the enthusiasm of the sage (who rarely wandered beyond the walls of Athens, and professed, like Dr. Johnson, that 'fields and trees would teach him nothing, while 'the men in the city could,') on being surprised into momentary rapture by the beauty of the scenery; — the humorous account of his being led thither — just as animals are allured onward by leaves or fruit — by the promised manuscript of *Lysias*, which *Phædrus* carries under his cloak; — the sublime prayer, not unlike that for which the wisest of men was so signally rewarded, with which the Dialogue closes, — 'Grant, ye Gods, that I may become beautiful within, and that whatever of external good I possess may be friendly to my internal purity: let me account the wise man rich; and of wealth let me have only so much as a prudent man can bear or employ;' — the sweet and solemn leave-taking of the world and his judges, and the confident declaration at the close of the *Apology*, that 'death is gain,' together with those passages, more sweet and solemn still, with which the *Phædo* has immortalised his martyrdom, and which Cicero declared he could never read without tears; — these beauties, and a thousand others like them, must give delight to every man of taste and feeling, without any reference whatever to the general value or worthlessness of the speculations



with which they are connected. Although, like scenes from Shakspeare's plays, they will be relished most by readers who can see them in their proper place, with all that introduces and surrounds them, they are yet inexpressibly charming even taken by themselves. Plato, as a whole, must, of course, be left to be fully appreciated by the scholar and the philosopher ; but there are parts of him which challenge a much more general admiration : just as Bacon's Essays have been read with pleasure by thousands who never aspired to master the *Novum Organum*. Nor are we by any means sure, if he were obliged to choose, that he would not, and ought not, to prefer the wide-world homage which is the reward of excellencies, which the wide world can appreciate, to the more circumscribed admiration of the little circle which can enter into his philosophy. Philosophies, alas ! for the most part, are of mortal birth, and expire ; but genuine eloquence and poetry are immortal.

We shall now, as we proposed, attempt an analysis of Plato's literary genius, and afterwards state precisely what we should wish to see attempted in the way of translation.

The mind of this great philosopher manifestly belonged to that very small class in which nature has not contented herself with bestowing some one or two faculties in extraordinary strength—compensating her partial generosity by a more niggardly allotment of other intellectual endowments ; nor, on the other hand, was it a mind on which she had bestowed the most various endowments in equal but moderate proportion ; it belonged to that select order to which Shakspeare and Bacon, Pascal and Leibnitz, are to be referred. On the contrary, it was a mind on which nature had resolved to lavish all her gifts in their most splendid variety, and most harmonious combinations, rich alike in powers of invention and acquisition ; equally massive and light ; strong and vigorous, yet pliable and versatile ; master at once of thought and expression ; in which originality and subtlety of intellect are surrounded by all the ministering aids of imagination, wit, humour, and eloquence. The structure of such a mind resembles some masterpiece of classic architecture, in which the marble columns rise from their deep foundation exquisitely fashioned and proportioned, surmounted with elaborate and ornamented capitals, and supporting an entablature inscribed with all forms of the beautiful.

Plato's style is unrivalled : he wielded at will all the resources of the most copious, flexible, and varied instrument of thought, through which the mind of man has yet breathed the music of eloquence. Not less severely simple and refined when he pleases than Pascal, — between whom and Plato there are many

resemblances, as in beauty of intellect, in the character of their wit, in aptitude for abstract science, and in moral wisdom, — the Grecian philosopher is capable of assuming every mood of thought and of adopting the tone, imagery, and diction appropriate to each. Like Pascal, he can be by turns profound, sublime, pathetic, sarcastic, playful; but with a far more absolute command over all the varieties of manner and style.\* He could pass by the most easy and rapid transitions from the majestic eloquence, which made the Greeks say that if Jupiter had spoken the language of mortals, he would have spoken in that of Plato, to that homely style of illustration and those highly idiomatic modes of expression, which mark the colloquial manner of his Socrates, and which, as Alcibiades, in his eulogium, observes, might induce a stranger to say that the talk of the latter was all about shoemakers and tailors, carpenters and braziers. †

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\* Some author (if we mistake not) finds a resemblance between the humour of Pascal and that of Aristophanes. We wonder that the juster parallel of Plato did not suggest itself. As Voltaire said of the Provincial Letters, that ‘the comedies of Molière did not surpass them ‘in wit, nor the eloquence of Bossuet in sublimity,’ so it may be said of Plato, that Aristophanes scarcely surpasses him in humour, or Demosthenes in eloquence. Pascal and Plato also resembled each other in their deep melancholy, as well as in their happy powers of raillery. How often has that union of refined wit and profound sadness been seen in the same genius!

† ‘Aristotle,’ says Mr. Lewes, ‘capitally describes Plato’s style as a ‘middle species of diction between prose and verse.’ But this critical dictum of Aristotle must be understood as applying only to certain portions of Plato’s compositions; it is false, if intended to designate any one uniform manner, for no such uniformity is to be found. Mr. Lewes himself not only admits that there are to be found in Plato passages of the most diverse beauty, but describes them with great vivacity (vol. i. p. 29.); though when he says Plato ‘has scarcely any ‘imagery,’ he will, we think, find few to coincide with him. He is more correct when he says that his illustrations are ‘for the most ‘part homely and familiar.’

In truth it were as easy to state in one word what is the hue of the rainbow, as to describe by one epithet the many-coloured diction of Plato. Specimens of a style as severely logical as that of Locke, as simple and elegant as that of Addison, as impassioned and elevated as that of Milton in the more lofty portions of his semi-poetic prose, may all be found in his works. — The work of Mr. Lewes is a very lively one, and contains much instruction in a small compass. We must confess, however, that for a professed sceptic concerning the truth of any and all systems of metaphysical philosophy, his manner is sometimes a little too dogmatical. The *historian* of philosophy has almost

Minds thus replenished and adorned with every species of intellectual excellence, with an equal variety and symmetry of powers, are indeed of rare occurrence. When they are permitted to appear among us, their productions are what we have stated Plato's to be, as remarkable for their *form* as for their *matter*. Great and original conceptions are bodied forth clothed in corresponding beauty of attire ; the works are themselves grand exhibitions of artistic ability, as well as repositories of brilliant theories or profound speculation. As such, they are well worthy of our study ; just as we gaze delighted on some antique vase or statue, not simply or even chiefly for the precious gold or marble of which it is made, but still more for the exquisite form in which they are moulded and the exquisite skill and taste which have presided over the workmanship. Indeed with regard to the *influence* of human compositions on mankind—their permanent influence—the form is as essential as the matter ; and, we may add, harder to be attained. Take, for example, the Provincial Letters of Pascal : many minds probably could have supplied the mere substance and staple of the argument which runs through that beautiful texture ; but the consummate arrangement—the conception and conduct of the whole—the lively dialogue—the dramatic painting—the perpetual wit—the powerful eloquence—the singular originality—who but himself could have combined ?

Great as is the dramatic skill of Pascal in that astonishing performance, not surpassed in our judgment by that displayed in any single dialogue of Plato, the latter has given us a far more diversified exhibition of similar powers. And certainly, as a proof of genius, the strength and facility with which he shapes and animates the very difficult form into which he has thrown his speculations, is even still more extraordinary than are the speculations themselves. It is comparatively easy to embody the results of philosophy in a plain didactic statement ; but to give them, without serious injury to their force or clearness, (especially when the subjects are abstruse and the points of discussion subtle,) in the form and colour of a fictitious dialogue, throughout which various characters, dramatically conceived and sustained, utter the sentiments appropriate to each ; in which the colloquial language of actual life is preserved, and amidst all those interruptions, transitions, and naturally conceived incidents which impart verisimilitude to the whole—is a task which, but

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as much reason to be sceptical of his conclusions, as the philosophers he examines ; whether his *opinion* as to what were *their* opinions, be correct, must be often as dubious as those opinions themselves.

for the success of Plato, might have been supposed impossible, since of all writers Plato has alone succeeded in it. Not that we feel disposed to contest Mr. Lewes's adjudication, that even Plato often 'sacrificed the general effect to his scrupulous dialectics;' and that his incessant repetitions were designed 'deeply to impress on the reader's mind the real force of his method.' Such a compromise, and to a certain extent, sacrifice of the dramatic interest, is unavoidable, where the ultimate object is didactic and argumentative, and not the appropriate pleasure of poetry. But it will be readily conceded that Plato has more nearly approached the solution of this problem—this union of incompatibles—than any other writer; while in some dialogues—as in the *Protagoras*, which Schleiermacher regards as designed to exhibit the superiority of the dialogistic method of Socrates—the union of philosophical matter and dramatic skill is all but perfect. To deliver didactic matter in the *form* of dialogue has been often attempted; as by Cicero, Henry More, Fénelon, Bishop Berkeley, and Bishop Hurd. But in general, even the better specimens of philosophical dialogue wholly fail in dramatic power, and are little else than a loose contexture of prolonged declamations in the mouths of two or three personages. No one can read the philosophical dialogues of Cicero, for example, without feeling the immense interval between himself and the great model which he so ardently admired, but so imperfectly imitated.

The conception and conduct of Plato's dialogues show a peculiar species of dramatic skill of the very highest order. The scenes are often laid, the plot contrived, and the characters and incidents invented, with consummate judgment. The persons of the drama stand out in their appropriate characteristics as distinctly as the various forms in a group of Greek statuary,—diversified in their expression and their attitudes, but all natural and all beautiful.

'The Socratic Dialogues,' says Gray, in those posthumous fragments of criticism which give him as distinguished a name among scholars as he had long possessed among poets, 'are a kind of dramas, wherein the time, the place, and the characters are almost as exactly marked as in a true theatrical representation.'

The centre of nearly all these groups of philosophic painting is Socrates—a wonderful portrait for distinctness and individuality, even if it were a mere copy of the great prototype; and a still more wonderful creation if, as is certain, it is in many respects an ideal representation of the artist's master. How far it was the one, and how far the other, has been matter of

much dispute among the critics. That the great moral sage of Greece was, at all events, a very extraordinary character is sufficiently evident even from the less ambitious delineation by Xenophon. That he was profoundly versed in his favourite science—that of Man, for which he had forsaken his early physical studies, because he had found them unsatisfactory; that he taught the most sublime and elevated ethics the heathen world had ever attained; that he gave his instructions gratuitously; that in the accomplishment of this noble, and, as he supposed, divinely appointed mission\*, he utterly neglected his private affairs—being of an opposite opinion to Horace Walpole, ‘that the public is big enough to take care of itself;’ that he maintained incessant warfare with the tribe of wandering sophists who, for hire, taught those pernicious mysteries of dishonest logic and deceptive rhetoric which corrupted the Athenian youth; that he was simple in his manners, sincere in his actions, of incorruptible integrity and constancy, capable of uttering truth in the face of all danger, and incapable of uttering falsehood to escape it,—all this history authenticates. Of his invincible love of justice, he gave a noble example on the only occasion on which he ever exercised the magisterial functions, opposing single-handed, and at the hazard of his life, the will of the Athenian democracy in one of their worst and most profligate acts of tyranny, and that, too, when all his colleagues cowered and bent before the storm. That he persisted to the close in the same consistent course, and died at last in the way so often told, and by Plato in particular with such inimitable pathos, as a martyr for truth and the victim of ignorance, calumny, and injustice, is also generally admitted.

It is more than probable that in the ideal representation which

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\* Much has been said of that difficult subject the ‘dæmon’ of Socrates. The diverse interpretations put upon the language of Plato and Xenophon respecting it are well known. For our own parts, we have no doubt that the view taken by Wiggers, and many other scholars, is substantially correct; that Socrates, like so many other highly-gifted and susceptible minds, was not without a tinge of enthusiasm, and sincerely attributed the sudden and imperious suggestion of some premonitions and presentiments, for which he could not otherwise account, to a preternatural origin. We do not believe him to have been really inspired, as some suppose—the invocation of Erasmus, ‘*Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis,*’ does not rise to our lips—*but* we could almost as readily bring ourselves to repeat it, as imagine him the *knave*, to which the theory of some of his professed admirers, among our too accommodating German interpreters, would, (however unintentionally,) reduce him.

Plato has given of Socrates, some infirmities and foibles have been concealed or softened. History at least gives us reason to suspect it. In the dialogues of Plato his superiority of genius, and his skill in argument, are never displayed offensively; nor is there the slightest departure from the genuine humility which will ever be found to accompany that truest species of wisdom, of which alone Socrates claimed possession—the deep conviction of our own ignorance. But history does not altogether sanction this picture of perfect amiability and modesty; it more than hints at certain airs of dogmatism and superciliousness, and at a certain strut and portliness of manner, which remind us of the familiar moods of another great moralist nearer home, — peculiarities, however, which, as in this last case, might well be pardoned to so much genius and worth.

If in these and some other respects, the moral as well as intellectual character of Socrates has gained from the pencil of his disciples, there are other points, and those far more serious, in which no mean critics have supposed him to have greatly suffered. Among the points which we think have been misunderstood, we would refer, as an instance, to some admirable critiques, full of vivacity and learning, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* more than twenty years ago. Some of the scenes in which Socrates is presented to us were calculated, it is surmised, ‘to inspire the same doubts in his contemporaries which he has since excited amongst posterity, whether he was the Silenus that his exterior figure betokened, or the Silenus of the sculptors’ shops, which, rude and grotesque to the outward view, opened to a touch, and disclosed within beautiful and exquisitely carved figures of the gods.’

The suspicion of Socrates intimated in this passage, seems to us scarcely just: and, indeed, throughout those very spirited articles, there appears a sort of prejudice against him. Entirely agreeing that both Plato and Xenophon have introduced him into scenes which are ineffably disgusting, and that in particular the eulogium of the drunken Alcibiades in the Banquet, wonderful as it is, contains a passage which no one who has ever read it would wish to read again, we yet think it is plain that Plato intended, even here, to intimate the superiority of Socrates to the worst vices of his countrymen, and his moral disapprobation of them. But though Socrates be thus exonerated, Alas! what must have been the social condition of a people, in which a great writer could find in an exemption from the very lowest forms of human depravity so egregious a singularity, as to extort out of it a topic of compliment to the sage he revered and loved! What must have been their

familiarity with the most infamous of vices, to induce even a drunken young profligate to point him out as a prodigy of temperance and fortitude, because he was not stained with them! Fully admitting the interpretation of Quintilian to be correct, and that Plato intended 'ut Socratis invictam continentiam ostenderet, quæ corrumpi — non posset,' — we feel that the compliment of Alcibiades to Socrates is much as if some youth had innocently expressed his astonishment that *though* he had repeatedly tempted and invited a Milton or a Newton to indulge in cannibalism, yet 'such was the wonderful fortitude and temperance of the men,' that they had resisted all his alluring importunities to partake of the choicest delicacies of a New Zealand *cuisine*. There are practices into which it is infamy indeed to fall; but which it can be no glory to shun.\*

But whatever flatteries, intellectual or moral, may be supposed to lurk in the Platonic portrait of Socrates, they cannot be said to extend to his personal peculiarities, which are given with no complimentary fidelity. Those peculiarities, indeed, are not all formally described in any one specific enumeration, but are dramatically produced in the natural development of the successive features of his character in the varied course of the dialogues, just as different incidents and conjunctures suggest their introduction. We there see the simplicity of his manners — his somewhat *too* philosophic negligence of ap-

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\* We must also admit, that, though Socrates himself had none but an honest meaning in his frequent inculcation of the pursuit of the supreme and essential beauty — that of wisdom and virtue — through all the lower forms of material beauty, as well as in his mystical, though not always wise, illustrations of the immortal through the medium of the mortal *ἔπος*, yet, to a people in the moral condition of the Athenians, such a path to purity would be a somewhat precarious and dangerous one. The road to Elysium in this case ran straight through the infernal regions, and there would be some hazard of the mortal traveller being detained upon the road. In vain will the philosophic Orpheus strive to recal the lost Eurydice, Virtue, by such strains; she is not for him, if he has to seek her in the shades. But for obvious reasons, we say no more on this topic. We are content to refer to the sentiments before expressed in this Journal, in a review of 'Mitchell's Aristophanes,' vol. xxxiv. p. 303. *note*.

It is humiliating to think, in the case of the Greeks, on the contrast between their intense love of beauty and their familiarity with the most odious vices of human nature; and to see how little the utmost refinement of taste in the arts has to do with the correction of the passions. It is as if we beheld a being compounded of the angel and the demon; the intellect of the one, and the passions of the other.

pearances — the oddities and eccentricities of an abstracted mind, such as history attributes to him — and even that eminent grotesqueness of visage by which (with all reverence be it spoken) he was also distinguished. There is an amusing passage in the beautiful introduction to the *Theætetus*, where Theodorus, after describing the early mental promise of the youth from whom the dialogue is named, and gravely adding, that he is far from being beautiful, begs Socrates not to be angry: ‘but, in fact, he ‘has a strong resemblance to you, in the prominence of his eyes ‘and in the *snubbishness* of his nose — only his eyes are not *so* prominent as yours, nor is his nose *so* snubbish.’ Socrates receives the communication with imperturbable temper, as usual, and bids him call *Theætetus* to him. The youth approaches, and Socrates says, ‘I have sent for you, *Theætetus*, just that I may ‘look upon myself, and see what sort of a face I have; for *Theodorus* says that I resemble you.’ We can easily imagine how awkward an ingenuous youth would feel under such a scrutiny, and how little he would relish the compliment involved. Socrates, however, who seldom failed to return a sarcasm, tells him, that if *Theodorus* had been a painter or a sculptor, his opinion on the resemblance of faces might, perhaps, have been entitled to attention; but as he was only a geometrician, it was not worth while to pay the least regard to him on such a subject, whether he praised or blamed. To this *Theætetus*, no doubt very cordially, agrees.

These odd features, and strange manners to match — not seldom allied to great genius and its attendant simplicity — must have given to the real Socrates a marked external individuality. Of his absence of mind, more than one story is told in ancient history. Socrates himself was fully aware, both from reflection and experience, of this ludicrous side of the philosophic character, and in his beautiful contrast in the *Theætetus*, between the true philosopher, ‘ignorant even of his ignorance’ of common matters (as he strongly expresses it), and the keen man of the world, does not omit to mention it. He illustrates the subject by a humorous reference to the adventure of *Thales*, who, while astronomizing as he walked, paid the penalty of unseasonable star-gazing by falling into a well; and was laughed at by a Thracian servant girl, for being so intent upon the distant as not to see what was at his feet. We are afraid that if it were worth while to retort the sarcasm on the multitude, it were easy to do so; for the great bulk of mankind are so intent upon what is close to them, that they hardly seem capable of reflecting on the distant and the future; so occupied with what is just at their feet, that they seldom raise their eyes to the starry heavens at all. Indeed, it is



thus that Socrates turns the tables upon them. It is well, however, when the organs of mental vision, like those of the body, can promptly adjust themselves to the degree of light and the distance or proximity of the object; and he who can do both these promptly, as the exigencies of the present or of the future — of the great or the little in life — demand, is alone worthy of the name of a fully developed man.

We can readily believe that the abstraction of Socrates laid him open to ridicule. We all know the stories which are told of Newton: — how, one morning, having commenced dressing, and having got one leg into those garments which are without a name, he was arrested in the operation by a sudden flash of light on some profound theorem; and sitting down on the bed, remained in that attitude for some hours, transfixed in meditation; how, on another occasion, he accomplished a perhaps still more striking feat of abstraction — no less than that he once thought he had dined when he had not; the human stomach being in general resolutely set against all such illusory conclusions. There is as wonderful a story told of Socrates: being on military service in the expedition to Potidea, he is reported to have stood for four-and-twenty hours before the camp, rooted to the same spot, and absorbed in deep thought, with his eyes fixed on the same object, as if his soul were absent from his body. This is, perhaps, as little true as some of the tales that are told of our own philosopher; but the popular invention or exaggeration of such anecdotes is always founded on a basis of fact; and we may rest assured that in the case of Socrates there were facts enough to found them upon.

But all the characteristics, whether mental or personal, which history attributes to the real Socrates, do not exhaust that wonderful creation which constitutes the Platonic Socrates; and it is with the Platonic Socrates we have now to do. In that portraiture, indeed, the peculiarities in question, though, as already said, probably softened in some instances, re-appear, and are most graphically described and most dramatically exhibited; but they are at the same time ideally represented and harmonized: not only so, they are wonderfully blended with *other* peculiarities, which Socrates either did not possess, or in a very limited degree; peculiarities which, in fact, constitute the soul of Plato himself, transmigrated into the person of his master, and speaking by his organs — yet, without suggesting the idea of incongruity. If any such idea ever obtrude itself, it is owing to the disturbing influence of certain associations connected with the historic Socrates. Supposing the Platonic Socrates to be known to us only as a pure creation

of fiction, we doubt whether any sense of inconsistency in the various phases, in which the character is presented, would have suggested itself; whether it would not have appeared to be the consistent ideal of a complete philosopher; of a man who, superior to all other men, as Alcibiades is made to declare him, was designed to be a combination of the most various mental endowments, conjoined with profound simplicity of mind and habits; of plastic capacity of adaptation to any circumstances, with a constant superiority to all. Whether the Richard III. of history be the Richard of Shakspeare is of great importance, if we consider the last as an historic portrait; of no importance at all in estimating its value as a poetic creation. It is much the same with the Platonic Socrates; in some respects inconsistent with the Socrates of history—in no way inconsistent with the ideal of Plato's conception. The whole creation, indeed, looks astonishingly natural—the superinduced elements blending with the original qualities; and though we may see that the Platonic Socrates never existed, any more than the Hamlet or Othello of Shakspeare, we also see that the whole is a harmonious assemblage of attributes and qualities, which might have existed in one and the same person without any violation of the conditions of the probable in human character.

Probably, however, even the discrepancy with the Socrates of history is much less than has generally been supposed. We must recollect that a large portion of the most abstruse of the Platonic doctrines is put, not into the mouth of Socrates, but into those of Parmenides, Timæus, and others; and again, that, in the myths of the Phædrus, he professes to speak in a poetic style unusual with him, and under the sudden access of a divine afflatus. Such passages, especially introduced, (as they often are,) in a vein half sportive, half serious, are perhaps not inconsistent with that rich combination of powers which we know that the real Socrates possessed; and still less with that wonderful facility of adaptation, which, preserving the basis of strong sense and invincible logic, Plato wished to exhibit in his dramatic representative. Nor was the original character of Socrates destitute of a vein of mysticism and enthusiasm; and, (as has been remarked by Mr. Mitchell) even in that later and maturer form in which Plato has portrayed him, traces still appear of many of the peculiarities, which had probably rendered the early Socrates of the *Clouds* a less extravagant caricature than has been generally imagined. Schleiermacher, in his '*Essay on the Worth of Socrates as a Philosopher*,' truly asserts that, if his stature has been exaggerated to gigantic

dimensions by Plato, it has been dwarfed by Xenophon;—he was in intellect a mean proportional, if we may so speak, between the Platonic and Xenophontic Socrates. We must also agree with this great critic, that if there were not often greater fascination and variety in the discourses of Socrates than appear in the pages of Xenophon, it is hard to conceive that the everlasting disputant should not have been voted by the volatile multitude a prodigious *bore*, or ‘that he should not, in the course of so many years, have cleared the market-place and the workshops, the walks and the wrestling-schools, by the dread of his presence.’

Whatever the intellectual powers of the real Socrates, it is to Plato, we apprehend, that we must ascribe very much of the metaphysical depth, by which the Platonic Socrates is distinguished, as well as the subtle sophistry which, when he wished to baffle a sophist, he knows as well how to assume as to expose. To the same source must we attribute the splendid declamation in which he sometimes indulges, and which was, in general, the object of his contempt and distrust; his many coloured diction and his varied imagery—now sublime, and now homely; his flowing eloquence, adapting itself to all themes and all persons; and his peculiar vein of refined and delicate railery. To this last quality no modern literature presents an adequate parallel; the nearest approximations, perhaps, are to be found in an occasional vein of Addison, or the Provincial Letters of Pascal.

Similar modifications of the character of the actual Socrates, or ‘exaggerations’ of certain qualities, appear in other features of his dramatic representative. Even seeming *paradoxes* are effectually reconciled, so as not to interfere with the impression of a consistent whole. For, neither do his natural simplicity nor his philosophic abstraction appear incompatible with his thorough knowledge of life, a knowledge probably more complete than that which the real Socrates possessed; nor does his profound study of the general theory of human nature seem inconsistent (as it often in *fact* is) with a sagacious perception of the diversities of individual character,—to which he adapts himself with all the adroitness of a man practised in the ways of the world. Under an air of impassive stolidity and gravity, he conceals the quickest perception of the ludicrous and the most vivid sense of humour. Negligent in his attire, and severe in his habits, his indifference to the luxuries and refinements of life is represented as simple and sincere,—the mere consistency of a genuine philosopher, aspiring to be master of himself, of his necessities, and his passions, and to put his happiness as much as possible

beyond the control of external elements: not paraded for admiration, nor prompted by the envy of superior wealth and splendour. He is no cynic; takes no credit for making himself uncomfortable, nor gratifies his pride by an affectation of humility. No one can say of him what he said himself so cuttingly to his disciple Antisthenes, that he could spy his pride through the holes in his thread-bare cloak: If, placing his foot on the costly couch of Plato, he had exclaimed, with Diogenes, 'Thus I tread on the pride of Plato,'—Plato could not have retorted, 'And with greater pride.' With all his uncouthness of feature and rusticity of appearance, the Platonic Socrates is, in conversation, always a perfect gentleman. He never loses sight of that exquisite refinement of manner which reigned over the social intercourse of the more polished Athenians, but keeps his temper throughout: and, though he may be giving expression to the most biting and caustic satire, it is with all the urbanity in the world. Inured to temperance, and preferring it as a *habit*, he yet accommodates himself to all companies, and can partake of good cheer as heartily as any body. In a most graphic passage in the dialogue called the Banquet, Plato carries this feature of his philosophic power of accommodation a little too far for our notions. 'No one ever saw Socrates drunk,' says Alcibiades in his panegyric, and adds, 'Of this, I expect you will shortly have a confirmation.' Accordingly Plato represents Socrates as vanquishing even those two jovial companions, Agathon and Aristophanes, one a tragic and the other the celebrated comic poet, at their own weapons,—arguing and drinking, and drinking and arguing with them all night long, the deep potations making on his head of adamant no impression whatever. The passage is so graphic a representation of the conclusion of a scene of ancient festivity, or rather, as it at last becomes, of revelry, that it may be worth while to condense the substance of it into a few sentences, without affecting the precision of a translation. The person from whose lips the report of the banquet is supposed to have been received, tells us, that many of the other guests having now gone home, he himself fell asleep in the banquet-room, and slept very soundly, (the nights being then long), and that he woke about daybreak, just as the cocks were crowing: That on awaking, he saw that some of the guests were still asleep, and that others had departed: That Agathon, Aristophanes, and Socrates, were the only persons still awake, and were drinking round out of a great goblet. He added that Socrates was arguing with them; but that he could form but an imperfect idea of the general course of the discussion—not having heard its

commencement. Yet the sum of it he said was this: that Socrates compelled them to acknowledge that it was the province of the same poet to be skilled in the composition of both comedy and tragedy: That, having been forced to assent to this, though a little too misty readily to follow the argument, they got drowsy, and that Aristophanes fell asleep first; and afterwards, it being now broad day, Agathon; but that Socrates, having vanquished them both in wine and logic, rose and went out. To conclude, Socrates went to the Lyceum, and, having washed himself, spent the day there just as if nothing had happened, and in the evening went home to rest.

We certainly do not adduce this passage to the laud and glory of the temperance of Socrates, which some of the commentators pretend Plato designed it to illustrate: for that is surely a novel sort of temperance which consists in a physical inability to swallow as much liquor as will produce drunkenness, and which originates in strength of head, rather than in the government of appetite. Plato evidently designed it merely as a proof of his indomitable hard-headedness, and power of accommodation to all sorts of circumstances; to show that to him it was all one to drink or abstain; to be a teetotaller or a three bottle-man; just as in the celebrated eulogium of Alcibiades, he is described at Potidea as overcoming all his fellow soldiers, both in fasting if they must fast, and in drinking if they *must* drink;—enduring the utmost extremities of cold and heat, fatigue and hunger: living either as every body else does, or as nobody else can, according to circumstances; walking with naked feet on the ice and snow, and clad in the same garments in summer and winter.

Another apparent paradox in the Platonic Socrates, yet beautifully harmonized, is the contrast between his seeming scepticism and his intense love of truth. Deeply impressed with the ignorance of man, and declaring that the Delphic oracle could have had no reason for pronouncing him the wisest of his race, unless for this—that he knew that he knew nothing, while the rest of mankind did not even know *that*—he is yet perpetually questioning, contending, arguing, confuting, on almost all subjects, if we except those great moral truths which his hopes and his faith, as well as his reason, seemed to carry beyond the mere domain of intellect. Still, however dissatisfied with the result of his investigations, he is evidently always in sincere search of truth, and tormented when he cannot find it. His manner is as different as possible from that of a sceptic, who, in the love of paradox, *wishes* to prove every thing uncertain; and, however affected may be the simplicity of

his understanding, it is evident that the simplicity of his heart is sincere.

The peculiar character of the *irony* of the Platonic Socrates has often been dilated upon. It is at all times difficult to discriminate the varieties of wit and humour, fugitive and multi-form as they are; and it is almost impossible in the present case to do this by any definition. The quality assumes different forms. The word irony, so often applied to the manner of Socrates, would, in its modern sense, very imperfectly suggest all that is characteristic of his humour; or, rather, it would suggest but a very small part of it. The word signifies, with us, a literal expression of the contrary of what we *mean* to express; or, at most, it usually suggests the idea of a single phrase or sentence or two. But the irony of Socrates extends to the whole character which, for the time, he sustains; and to his whole course of procedure in stripping and confuting a conceited adversary. It may be not unfittingly expressed by saying, that it is a *logical masked battery*. Under the disguise, though in a manner amusingly varied, of a character which, in a deeper sense, he sincerely professed—that of being ignorant of every thing but his ignorance—Socrates enters the presence of some renowned master of wisdom with the air of a man intellectually poverty-stricken, bankrupt in all science and argument; and after, perhaps, affecting the profoundest veneration for his genius, or listening with an air of admiring stupefaction (as in the Protagoras) to his gorgeous declamation, he humbly suggests that some little difficulty still occurs to him, which he doubts not so much wisdom can in a moment solve; and begs, with all deference, to ask two or three questions, simple questions—not at all with the idea of disputing the conclusions so cogently maintained, but simply for his own satisfaction. These urbane compliments and this affected humility are expressed with such entire gravity and self-possession, that they add unspeakably to the humour of the dialogue in the eye of those who know his real sentiments and intentions, and often make us wonder at even *his* power of face; while to strangers, they must infallibly have suggested the idea of perfect sincerity. Indeed, even to those who are behind the scenes, the expressions of compliment and admiration often seem so *very* grave that, unless we suppose them partly owing to a real admiration of powers, which—though, in his judgment, perverted, and to which he himself made no pretension—were yet felt to be splendid of their kind, we must confess that the irony of the Platonic Socrates sometimes comes as near a barefaced *lie* as we should care to impute to so renowned a lover of truth.

The sophist, however, if a stranger, elated by his praises, and charmed with the deference of one who, so far from professing to rival him in his own field, seems rather likely to prove a docile listener than a formidable antagonist, encourages him in a patronizing manner to propose his doubts and difficulties, and assures him of a satisfactory and instant solution. Socrates thanks him, and generally begins with some question apparently so simple—so stupidly simple, and at such a distance from the field of discussion, that his opponent, no doubt, often hesitates, whether most to admire the docility, or wonder at the stupidity of the querist; and with a complacent smile, half of pity, half of contempt, promptly replies. Other questions succeed, faster and faster, more and more difficult, and gradually approaching in one long spiral of interrogations the central position, in which the unhappy sophist's argument stands; he now finds it impossible to escape, and confounded, perplexed, and irritated, discovers that he is compelled to admit some palpable contradiction to his original assertions, and this too by means of those simple and innocent premises which he had so unsuspectingly granted. He feels himself within the coils of a great logical *boa constrictor*, who binds his folds tighter and tighter, till the poor sophist is absolutely strangled. Often, however, Socrates does not proceed to this at once; but, ingenious in the art of tormenting, and liberal of sport to the delighted spectators, he gently uncoils his folds, and suffers his victim to breathe awhile; but only to entangle him again in the same toils. Nothing can be finer than the art with which, in these interludes, Plato represents Socrates playing (as whalers would say) with the monster he has harpooned; or, as we deal with a fretted horse, patting, and soothing, and conciliating him;—turning the conversation for a time to other topics, to remove his victim's suspicions, and suffer his sullenness or his irritation to subside; often with the most provoking air of sincerity professing to condole with him on the sudden disappearance of that fine and promising speculation in which he had hoped to find a satisfaction of his own difficulties; urging him to try again, and give another definition; proffering his own assistance in the investigation, and pretending that they will hunt the truth in couples; asking him whether he does not think with him on such and such a point, though we are internally convinced all the time, that the plausible proposition to which he requests the sophist's concurrence will prove a fallacy in the upshot, and that all the assistance that Socrates will render him, will be slyly to give his companion's crutch a kick as they go along, and leave him sprawling in the mire. It is in

these moods (if we may compare great things with small,) that a homely representation of the Platonic Socrates may here and there be found in the conversations of the renowned *Édie Ochil-tree* with the *Antiquary*. In the old blue gown's shrewdness, penetration into character, practical sound sense, long-drawn banter, and provoking hypocrisy of condolence with the worthy *Antiquary's* disasters, a transient thought of the mocking figure of Socrates will again and again occur to a reader who has lately parted company with him in one or other of Plato's comic scenes.

Such are some of the scenes in which the Platonic Socrates plays a part—alternated, indeed, with prodigious skill and genius, according to the characters introduced and the subjects discussed. And if the real discussions, in which the original Socrates engaged, at all approached them, we cannot wonder that he should have been so great a favourite with the Athenian youth—independently of the reverence felt for his character and the value attached to his instructions. Neither a bull-fight at Madrid, nor an execution in London, could have greater attraction for the refined populace of those cities, than the flaying and dissecting of a sophist at the hands of so dexterous an anatomist as Socrates, must have had for the intellectual and subtle youth of Athens.

While this kind of irony is the prevailing characteristic of the manner of Socrates, and constitutes its humour—not unaccompanied, however, with the most graceful incidental examples of repartee and raillery, in single sentences—there is a manifest modification of it according to the different nature and deserts of those with whom he was disputing. Upon the sophists he exercised it in all its pitiless severity; in his contests with them, he neither gave nor accepted quarter. With whatever exaggeration their sentiments and proceedings may be represented by Plato, there can hardly be a doubt that, in the time of Socrates, the sophists were exerting a most pernicious influence on the youth of Greece, and more particularly, of Athens. Arrogating the exclusive possession of wisdom, they pretended to have attained important secrets in political science; and boldly advertised that they could infallibly impart to the young, for a certain sum of money, the arts of 'persuasion' and statesmanship, and, the means in general of disputing successfully on any subject, 'making the worse appear the 'better reason.' It has been ingeniously maintained by some historians of philosophy, that this last supposition is incredible; since such an open insult to all public morals could never have been permitted in any community. And, it is far from impro-



bable, that in this description of the sophists, as a body, Plato and others may have given us in an extreme form what he believed and perceived to be the genuine tendency and effect of their conduct and instructions; nor would these tendencies be the less dangerous—rather more so—when, instead of being openly stated, they were carefully disguised. To drive the sophists from the field was a vocation worthy of the powers of Socrates.\* Their claim to science was in direct opposition to his profession of ignorance: the mercenary character of their instructions, to the gratuitous teachings in which he gloried:

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\* It would be a great error to suppose that Plato in the *Gorgias*, or in any other of his writings in which he inveighs against rhetoric, intended to imply that the art of persuasion was of no importance, or of worse than none. He was not ignorant, any more than his scholar Aristotle, that much depends on the form in which truth and argument are presented, 'and that some men persuade more effectually than others,'—the cause and the topics being precisely the same. Indeed, the furtive way in which his Socrates so uniformly prepares for the admission of his arguments in the mind of the reluctant or ignorant listener, may convince us that no one was more deeply acquainted with this truth. *Gorgias*, it is true, would naturally stand aghast when Socrates, in reply to the question of Polus—what science he supposed rhetoric to be—answers, 'None at all, but a certain tact, 'or practical knack,' which has for its object to please and soothe ignorance by deceitful flatteries; and goes on in a style of admirable banter to degrade it to the level of 'cooking.' But the whole dialogue shows that Plato is directing his satire, not against all well-directed and honest efforts to *persuade*, but against such efforts when divorced from simplicity and rectitude of purpose; in a word, against that pernicious rhetoric, or rather, as Schleiermacher calls it, that '*soi-disant* art of politics,' which he truly believed was doing such infinite mischief to the young politicians of the day; according to which *success* was every thing.—The art of persuasive argumentation will, like every other *instrumental* art, be capable of abuse; but, it were a strange remedy for an abuse, to explode the thing itself, and by refusing to use it, leave the unprincipled the monopoly of its abuse. Nevertheless, the feelings with which we regard any particular rhetorical school must always depend on the characters of those who teach, and of those who are taught; and if, whether avowedly or in disguise, the art is *in fact* perverted, and its professors are found not merely maintaining that its abuse is an accident, but teaching their pupils to regard it as an unimportant accident, all wise men will have one and the same opinion of such a school. The art of defence is valuable, but if the fencing master sedulously teaches his pupils, or leads them inevitably to infer, that it little matters *how* the sword is used, we should think that ignorance in the matter were better than skill. It is against such perverted rhetoric only that Plato speaks. (*Vide* Stallbaum's Introduction to the *Gorgias*.)

they were urging his country towards its ruin, he was labouring to save it. With them, therefore, he kept no terms in the exercise of his ridicule; they were the rats of the commonwealth, and he the ferret; they were the crocodiles, and he the ichneumon. Always maintaining the same imperturbable temper and the same urbane tone, he yet pushes them to the last extremity; never suffers them to shuffle off a dispute with a quibble or a compliment to himself; and never rests satisfied till he has extorted from them, often as with a logical rack or thumbscrew, and after joyful grimaces on their part, the acknowledgment that they have affirmed what is incapable of proof. If, in disputing with them, he at any time condescends to use their own sophistry, he never helps them to detect it, but leaves them to detect it themselves, or to be deceived by it, as may happen — unless, indeed, he has first procured their assent to it for the very purpose of confuting them. Sophists themselves, they are to be sometimes ensnared and punished by sophistry; ‘the cunning are to be taken in their own craftiness.’

Some brief examples of this pertinacity of manner may, perhaps, amuse the reader. Thus, when Protagoras intimates that, ‘if Socrates pleases,’ he has no objection to assent to a certain proposition, the latter replies that the argument has nothing to do with ‘if you please,’ or ‘if you approve,’ or any such conciliatory hypotheses; they are discussing, not assumptions, but their real sentiments, and every such ‘if’ (which, in this case, was certainly not likely to vindicate its ancient character of ‘peacemaker’) must be got rid of. Thus, too, in the *Enthyphro*, when in disproving one of the definitions of ‘Holiness,’ laid down by that champion of superstition, Socrates argues that, according to such definition, religion must be a sort of *traffic* between gods and men; ‘A traffic let it be,’ says *Enthyphro*, ‘if you choose to call it so.’ ‘I do not choose to call it so,’ says the pertinacious disputant, ‘unless it really be so.’—His favourite artifice of putting his interrogatories, not in his own person, but in that of an imaginary third party, is often employed to increase the ridicule with which he ultimately covers his opponent. Thus, in the *Protagoras*, having in a series of questions, (prepared *satis captiosè*, as *Stallbaum* says,) procured the sophist’s assent to certain propositions, he gradually introduces a third party as interrogating them both, and begging their assent to some admissions simple enough, but inconsistent with those propositions. Having brought the argument to this point, he asks ‘If our querist should further say to us, What then were you affirming a little while ago? Did I hear you rightly? Did you not say

‘so and’ so? — For my part, I should reply — In every thing ‘else, except *one* thing, my friend, you heard quite correctly — ‘it was so said; but, in supposing that it was *I* who said it, you ‘were mistaken. It was Protagoras here who said it; I merely ‘asked the question.’ In the *Hippias Major*, having demolished many of the sophists’ theories of the beautiful, Socrates introduces his imaginary interlocutor as urging a new objection to some new explanation: ‘Perhaps,’ says the sophist, ‘the man may not think of that, Socrates;’ — a stroke of satire perhaps a little too broad, but designed to mark a sophist’s solicitude rather for victory than truth: ‘By the dog, Hippias,’ is the reply, ‘but that man would though — before whom I ‘should be most of all ashamed to talk nonsense, and affect to ‘say something, when in reality I have said nothing.’ ‘Who ‘is this man?’ ‘Socrates, the son of Sophroniscus; who would ‘no more permit me to speak so glibly on points which had not ‘been thoroughly investigated, than he would allow me to talk ‘of things I am ignorant of, as if I knew them.’

The same familiarity and doggedness in reducing an opponent to the last extremities, is pleasantly displayed in other parts of the same dialogue. Thus, when in refuting one of the explanations of *Hippias*, Socrates presses him to say, whether he does not ‘think that a sycamore ladle, under given circumstances, is ‘more beautiful than one of gold,’ the sophist, who strongly reluctates against this and other *vulgar* illustrations of so ‘noble’ a subject, suddenly bethinks himself of another hypothesis, and asks, ‘Shall I tell you now, Socrates, what you ‘shall say the beautiful is, so as to prevent the man from all ‘further cavilling and disputing?’ ‘By all means,’ says Socrates; ‘but *not before you tell me*, which of the two ladles we have ‘been talking of is the more beautiful, as being the more fit and ‘becoming.’ ‘Well then, if it pleases you,’ says Hippias, ‘answer him, it is that made of the sycamore tree.’ ‘Now,’ replies Socrates, ‘you may say what you were just going to say.’ To another exquisitely vague explanation of *Hippias*, Socrates replies that, if he should offer such a solution to the unknown querist, he is afraid that he shall meet with something worse than ridicule; that he will get a beating for it. ‘Will he not ‘be punished,’ says Hippias, ‘for having beaten you injuriously?’ ‘I should think he would not, Hippias,’ is the sly retort: ‘*not* having beaten me injuriously if I had made him such an ‘answer; but, as it seems to me, very deservedly.’ Repeatedly baffled in the argument, the sophist, with a sophist’s effrontery, declares that, though unaccountably at a loss, yet if he could but step aside for a moment, and meditate a little, he is con-

fidant that he should be able to hit upon the solution of the difficulty. 'But I am afraid,' says Socrates, 'so extreme is my desire of knowing it, that I shall not be able to wait your time;' and he again embroils him in fresh difficulties and contradictions.

Socrates does not mind even affecting a mental infirmity for the purpose of making his opponent more ridiculous. For instance, when Protagoras has once and again broken away from the close fight of brief question and answer into his gorgeous declamation, Socrates laments that he is unhappily gifted with a very short memory, and that if any one makes long discourses to him, he straightway forgets the subject of discussion. He deploras this infirmity — heartily wishes that it were otherwise — but since it is so, and since it is all one to so great a master of eloquence as Protagoras to speak copiously or briefly, he begs him to abridge his answers in condescension to his weakness. The whole scene, down to where Alcibiades says that Socrates is but jeering at them when he talks of his short memory, and that he will be security that Socrates shall *forget* nothing, is one of the finest examples of the Platonic raillery.

Very different, and in some respects more agreeable, is the exhibition of the Socratic irony, as he exercised it on the intellectual youths, who repaired to him for instruction. There are the same general characteristics indeed, and the same amusing embarrassments are produced by it, but they are directed to a different end. We enjoy the discomfiture of the sophist as a piece of poetical justice; it is well that arrogance and conceit should be humbled, and hollowness and pretension exposed. On the other hand, when Socrates is conversing with such youths as Theætetus and Meno, we see him using his pleasantry, not for the purpose of perplexing them, though it has that effect most perfectly, but of eliciting their own latent strength and vigour — of developing their faculties in the search for truth — and of not merely teaching them truth, but teaching them the yet more difficult art of *finding* it for themselves. Doubtless, with all this, in so keen an anatomist of human nature, and so exact an observer of individual character, there is conjoined the pleasure of seeing a young mind at work; of beholding the pulsations, so to speak, of intellectual life; but there is evidently also a love — half sportive and half serious, — of watching its mere perplexities — of playing fast and loose with it, and, as we say, *bamboozling* it. We often see this sort of play, more or less, in the intercourse of great minds, when humorous and amiable, with the young. They seem to enjoy almost equally the spectacle of the mystification they have occasioned, and the

mental activity they have provoked; they love to puzzle them and enlighten them by turns. Young people are quite as sensitive, on their part, to this rapid alternation of jest and earnest, treacherous banter, and effective aid. The stimulus which it imparts is a sufficient explanation of the fact, that they become more attached to such instructors than to a graver and more didactic pedagogue. But while it was doubtless an amusement to Socrates to watch the effect of his puzzling questions, and all the odd discomfitures and embarrassments to which his logic subjected his young disputants, he never fails in *their* case to lend them a helping hand. He here really 'hunted' the truth with them; he loved to share their toils, to point out the way to them, to beat for game, and has an evident satisfaction in letting them appear to take as prominent a part as possible in running it down and killing it for themselves. In this spirit he encourages Theætetus, by telling him that he inherited, in behalf of the young, the same art as that of his mother Phænarete, who was one of those good matrons sent for in haste, when some young Athenian was about to be born into the world: He sustains, he says, a similar reputable office in relation to *mind* — that his business is to assist at any intellectual births which are attended with special difficulty, and to pronounce whether the new-born idea is worthy of being permitted to live. All the progeny of poor Theætetus, born with many throes, expire as soon as they see the light, under the rude hand of this logical accoucheur.

Of the different way, in which he exercised his pleasantry according as he was dealing with a sophist or with an ingenuous youth, we have a naïve statement by himself in the *Meno*. On the latter asking what Socrates would say, if it were objected to a definition which he had just given, that one of the terms was as little understood as those it was used to explain, Socrates replies, 'I should say that I had spoken the truth: And, if it were any of our very wise and wrangling and contentious sophists that asked the question, I should say, "I have spoken; and, "if I have not spoken to the purpose, it is your business "to take up the discourse and refute me." But if friends now, such as you and I are, want to have a little conversation together, why, we must answer more gently, and indeed logically; for perhaps it is a more logical proceeding, not simply to say what is true, but to say it by means of truths already acknowledged by the pupil.'

In the same dialogue, *Meno* is supposed to tender himself in his own proper person as an example of the victimising force of the Socratic logic. He compares Socrates, who was constantly infusing doubt into others, to the torpedo, which benumbed

whoever touched it: And, accordingly, he admits that he felt under his hands cramped alike in thought and expression; though he had often declaimed with fluent elegance, as he flattered himself, on the subject under discussion — what was virtue — he now found himself in helpless embarrassment. Socrates replies, that he does not raise doubts in other people except when he is himself uncertain: and he denies, therefore, the justness of the comparison, unless the torpedo can benumb itself as well as others.

It may be permitted us now just to state what we should like to see executed in regard to an English Plato. We cannot admit that there is *no* demand for Plato in this country: for the repeated editions of the unworthy version from Dacier show that the public is not unwilling to possess *something* of this great author. For anything like a complete translation, we are well aware that we must be content to wait perhaps for years. But, there can be no possible reason why we need wait many months for such a selection as would supply our chief wants. In these days of cheap publication, when the matter of valuable quartos is compressed into close-printed, but still very handsome, duodecimos, two or three of such volumes might be excellently well filled by a selection from the dialogues: taking as its basis (after careful revision and correction by some competent scholar) the nine dialogues, so skilfully translated on the whole by Sydenham. The ‘*Menexenus*’ of West, the ‘*Apology*,’ the ‘*Crito*,’ and the ‘*Phædo*,’ from some modern version (similarly revised,) should be added: as also new translations of the ‘*Protagoras*,’ the ‘*Theætetus*,’ and the ‘*Gorgias*.’ Of the three last most magnificent compositions it is disgraceful to our literature that we have no creditable version. Surely one or more of the contributors to Dr. Smith’s\* excellent dictionaries, now in course of publication, might confer this boon upon the public.

But this is not the only project we are desirous of seeing executed on behalf of Plato for the English public. We have spoken of the many beautiful fragments which may be found in his works, which are either capable of being separated without injury from the context, or are really collateral and episodical to the main topics discussed. We have often thought that a most

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\* We take this opportunity of recommending two publications, the titles of which will be found at the head of this article (Nos. I. and II.), and which also are edited by Dr. Smith. We should be happy to find that there was sufficient encouragement to induce him to present other portions of Stallbaum’s admirable edition in a similar form; and we should like to have Stallbaum’s Introductions as well as Notes.

delightful little volume might be compiled out of some such fragments ; presenting entire scenes from particular dialogues, — for example, the highly graphic introductions, and conclusions of many of them ; — some of the noble myths and fables by which Plato illustrates philosophic truth — descriptions of character — apophthegms and maxims of weighty and sententious wisdom — and select portions of the more lively and humorous conversation. Indeed, the entire substance of many dialogues might in this way be compressed into a very narrow space, by connecting the series of such extracts with a brief summary of the topics and arguments which fill up the intervals. To the majority of readers such a mode of presenting many parts of the longer and more difficult dialogues would be even more intelligible, and far less tedious, than an entire translation ; for it must be confessed that what Gibbon too summarily calls the ‘ verbal argumentation ’ of Socrates, and the profuse and often prolix illustrations, are a little apt to weary the patience of any reader, who is not either a philosopher or a scholar.

Such a work as we venture to sketch would a little resemble Van Heusde’s entertaining volumes entitled ‘ *Initia Philosophiæ Platonicae*. ’ We beg to suggest to Mr. Knight, whether it might not form two or three volumes of his popular series, and we should certainly felicitate both him and ourselves, if he could prevail on the same accomplished scholar who has recently given us such admirable translations of some of the lives of Plutarch, illustrative of the Civil Wars of Rome, to attempt its execution. Or if the task of compilation be too tedious for scholars so capable of better things, might not two or three combine for the purpose, — each taking distinct dialogues ? One or two scenes from the ‘ *Gorgias* ’ are appended to the second volume of Mr. Lewes’ manual of the history of philosophy ; and, though necessarily compressed, they are translated with so much spirit, that we hope their unknown author might be persuaded to join the party. Is it too much to expect some such tribute from the modern scholarship of England to the memory of the great master of the Academy, who has hitherto been so inadequately treated by English translators ? Nothing can be more true than the following sentences from the article on Thomas Taylor inserted in the ‘ *Penny Cyclopædia* : — ‘ It seems that our professed scholars have not done their duty to the public : if they had given us good translations with their own annotations, the labours of Mr. Taylor would not have been called for. . . . There are important works yet untranslated, and there are many translations which are disgraceful to the literary character of our country ; it is time

‘ then that our scholars should look to these matters, and see  
 ‘ that things which must and will be done, be done well.’

But we must conclude, and we will do so with a single remark. We certainly hold the entire dramatic projection and representation of Socrates in the pages of Plato to be one of the most wonderful efforts of the human mind. In studying him, it is impossible that his character as a teacher of ethics, and his life-like mode of representation, should not suggest to us another character, yet more wonderfully depicted, and by the same most difficult of all methods, that of dramatic evolution by discourse and action ; of one, who taught a still purer, sublimer, and more consistent ethics, pervaded by a more intense spirit of humanity ; of one, whose love for our race was infinitely deeper and more tender ; who stands perfectly free from those foibles which history attributes to the real Socrates, and from that too Protean facility of manners which, though designed by Plato as a compliment to the philosophic flexibility of *his* character of Socrates, really so far assimilated him with mere vulgar humanity ; of one, too, whose sublime and original character is not only exhibited with the most wonderful dramatic skill, but in a style as unique as the character it embodies — a style of simple majesty, which, unlike that of Plato, is capable of being readily translated into every language under heaven ; of one, whose life was the embodiment of that virtue which Plato affirmed would entrance all hearts, if seen, and whose death throws the prison scenes of the Phædo utterly into the shade ; of one, lastly, whose picture has arrested the admiring gaze of many who have believed it to be *only* a picture. Now, if we feel that the portraiture of Socrates in the pages of Plato involved the very highest exercise of the highest dramatic genius, and that the cause was no more than commensurate with the effect, it is a question which may well occupy the attention of a *philosopher*, how it came to pass that, in one of the obscurest periods of the history of an obscure people, in the dregs of their literature and the lowest depths of superstitious dotage, so sublime a conception should have been so sublimely exhibited ; how it was that the noblest truths found an oracle in the lips of the grossest ignorance, and the maxims of universal clarity, advocates in the hearts of the most selfish of narrow-minded bigots ; in a word, who could be the more than Plato (or rather the many, each more than Plato) who drew that radiant portrait, of which it may be truly said ‘ that a far greater than  
 ‘ Socrates is there ?’



- ART. II.—1. *Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey.* By JOSEPH COTTLE. London, 1847.
2. *Biographia Literaria; or Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions.* By Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Second Edition, prepared for publication in part by the late Henry Nelson Coleridge, completed and published by his Widow. London, 1847.
3. *A Memoir of the Life and Writings of William Taylor of Norwich, containing his correspondence of many years with Robert Southey, Esq.* Compiled and edited by J. W. ROBERTS, F.G.S. of Norwich. London, 1843.

THE lives of Coleridge and Southey are yet to be written. For that of Coleridge a large quantity of materials has from time to time been thrown before the public; much of which relatives must have wished withheld. Perhaps the best thing now remaining for the family, would be to find a kind and discerning friend, to whom might be entrusted the relating truly, but without exaggeration, the unhappy passages of his life. It is impossible to read five pages of Mr. Cottle's reminiscences, without seeing that he has one of the kindest hearts joined to one of the worst judgments of any man that ever lived. His revelations, to which there is a very large addition in this new edition, appear to leave no longer any choice to those, who, from affection to his person or admiration of his genius, must desire that the life and character of Coleridge should be known and remembered for good as well as for evil,—for something better than a long train of humiliating weaknesses and neglected duties.

Among the additions to Mr. Cottle's new edition are a number of letters from Southey. Indeed, almost the whole of what relates to him is new; and of all Mr. Cottle's disclosures concerning Coleridge, the opinion of him, as expressed in these letters, is the most painful. The disapprobation, severely as it is delivered, does Southey no discredit; no impartial person can deny its justice. At the same time, he never can have wished that his harsh judgment should go forth alone and be supposed to represent his estimate of the whole of Coleridge's character, or all his feelings towards him. Above all, most assuredly he never could have imagined, that a confidential correspondence with their common friend and benefactor would have been published to the world, while any children of Coleridge were alive to be pained by their uncle's testimony against

their father. He cannot have anticipated, that Mr. Cottle would 'think this proper.'

Except for the unseasonable publication of these passages, we should thank Mr. Cottle, without any abatement, for giving us so many of Southey's letters. His life might be almost written from his correspondence with William Taylor for the period comprised in it. And his extensive correspondence with other friends will supply his biographer with materials for the rest. This is a fortunate thing for Southey, for his letters are the perfection of letter writing, or nearly so; clear, lively, unaffected, largely dashed with humour, and entering into whatever he is writing or reading. But, what is still more in his favour, he is not seen here as the fierce controversialist or uncharitable politician. On the contrary, the kind and friendly heart beams out continually from them; so that, while fresh from the perusal of them, our sympathy with his attachments disposes us to leave him a little more latitude for the capriciousness of his antipathies than of old, and we are willing to put a lenient construction upon those unpleasant faults of temper, and provoking prejudices and errors into which people are pretty sure of falling, when they shut themselves up with their women, their admirers, and their books. 'Am I the better or the worse,' he asks in one of his letters to Mr. Taylor, 'for growing alone like a single oak?' In many respects worse, there can be no doubt. We meet in his letters with many a harsh criticism on contemporaries, of whom, if he had known them, he would have judged differently; and many broodings on political events, which he would have discarded, had he but come a little oftener to London, and let himself be hustled in its streets and contradicted at its dinner tables. Such passages might have provoked us to anger, if we had still to deal with Southey living; but he is gone:—the grave has closed over a writer and a man of whom England has reason to be proud, and our angry controversies are buried with him.

The new edition of Coleridge's '*Biographia Literaria*' was begun and carried some way by his nephew, the late Henry Nelson Coleridge, and has been since completed by a lady who is the poet's daughter, and nephew's widow. Of such a work we would speak with the respect due alike to her position, her talents, and her feelings. She describes, in a few touching words, the task, which had thus descended on her, as one 'full of affecting remembrances, and brought upon me by the deepest sorrow of my life.' A biographical sketch, begun by her husband, but which does not proceed farther than Coleridge's twenty-fourth year, and which even so far has the appearance

of only a skeleton sketch, is appended to the work. To this Mrs. Nelson Coleridge has only added a brief chronological account of her father's publications. But she has prefixed a long 'Introduction,' in answer to various attacks. We abstain from particular criticism. The publication of Mr. Cottle's second edition of his 'Reminiscences,' a few days after the appearance of the new edition of the '*Biographia Literaria*,' must have painfully convinced her, how disqualified even the gifted daughter of a gifted parent may be for the strict responsibilities of a judge, in a case like the present,—no less, how vain her affectionate endeavours to clear the memory of her father from all, and even heavy blame.

It appears that when Mr. Cottle was engaged in preparing the first edition of his book, he consulted Southey about it. Southey's letters on this occasion are now published. He wrote as follows, 14th of April, 1836, and again, on the 30th of September, to the same effect:—

'If you are drawing up your "Recollections of Coleridge" for separate publication, you are most welcome to insert anything of mine which you might think proper: but it is my wish that nothing of mine may go into the hands of any person concerned in bringing forward Coleridge's MSS.

'I know that Coleridge, at different times of his life, never let pass an opportunity of speaking ill of me. Both Wordsworth and myself have often lamented the exposure of duplicity which must result from the publication of his letters, and of what he has delivered by word of mouth to the worshippers by whom he was always surrounded. To Wordsworth and to me it matters little. Coleridge received from us such substantial services as few men have received from those whose friendship they had forfeited. This, indeed, was not the case with Wordsworth, as it was with me, for he knew not in what manner Coleridge had latterly spoken of him. But I continued all possible offices of kindness to his children, long after I regarded his own conduct with that utter disapprobation which alone it can call forth from all who had any sense of duty and moral obligation.'

After this it is vain for relatives any longer to let their affections dictate to them more than a qualified version of the life of Coleridge. It is a brother-in-law who writes; and that brother-in-law, Southey. The facts cannot be got rid of. But we must bear in mind that incidents arising out of their family connection probably aggravated his asperity of feeling: and that a hasty letter to a friend would not be likely to contain the calm and comprehensive review of the character of his departed brother-in-law, for which he would wish to be held responsible to the world. They had become brothers-in-law forty years before. There arose, even then, a misunderstanding between

them, and for several months an estrangement. In 1796, they were living in Bristol, on opposite sides of the same street, holding no intercourse. Southey made the first overture for reconciliation, by sending across the street a slip of paper with these words from Schiller's *Conspiracy of Fiesco* written upon it; 'Fiesco! Fiesco! thou leavest a void in my bosom, which the human race thrice told will never fill up.' Forty years, whatever may have happened to excite wrath, would not have utterly effaced such feelings. His admiration of the intellectual powers of his friend was even greater. Some years after, when he thought Coleridge was dying, he could not help expressing it to William Taylor — a less partial judge:—

'Coleridge and I have often talked of making a great work upon English literature: but Coleridge only talks, and, poor fellow! he will not do that long, I fear; and then I shall begin, in my turn, to feel an old man, — to talk of the age of little men, and complain like Ossian. It provokes me when I hear a set of puppies yelping at him, upon whom he, a great good-natured mastiff, if he came up to them, would just lift up his leg and pass on. It vexes and grieves me to the heart, that when he is gone, as go he will, nobody will believe what a mind goes with him, — how infinitely and ten thousand-thousand fold, the mightiest of his generation.'

This was written in June, 1803; in December he was still desponding about Coleridge's health.

'I know not when any of his works will appear, and tremble lest an untimely death should leave me the task of putting together the fragments of his materials: which, in sober truth, I do believe would be a more serious loss to the world of literature, than it ever suffered from the wreck of ancient science.'

Southey's admiration was reciprocated by Coleridge; and what it might fall short of in homage to his genius, it more than made up for in its testimony to his moral nature. We are tempted to extract from the '*Biographia Literaria*' (of which we are glad to have a new edition, though we should have preferred it less burdened with commentary) a portion of an eloquent eulogium on Southey, to which his nephew informs us that Coleridge referred in his will, as expressing his latest feelings. It is a pity that Southey should have ever heard of any thing to the contrary.

'To those who remember the state of our public schools and universities some twenty years past, it will appear no ordinary praise in any man to have passed from innocence into virtue, not only free from all vicious habit, but unstained by one act of intemperance, or

the degradations akin to intemperance. That scheme of head, heart, and habitual demeanour, which in his early manhood and first controversial writings, Milton, claiming the privilege of self-defence, asserts of himself, and challenges his calumniators to disprove: this will his school-mates, his fellow-collegians, and his maturer friends, with a confidence proportioned to the intimacy of their knowledge, bear witness to as again realized in the life of Robert Southey. But still more striking to those, who by biography or by their own experience are familiar with the general habits of genius, will appear the poet's matchless industry and perseverance in his pursuits: the worthiness and dignity of those pursuits; his generous submission to tasks of transitory interest, or such as *his* genius alone could make otherwise; and that having thus more than satisfied the claims of affection or prudence, he should yet have made for himself time and power to achieve more, and in more various departments, than almost any other writer has done, though employed wholly on subjects of his own choice and ambition. But as Southey possesses, and is not possessed by, his genius, even so is he master even of his virtues. The regular and methodical tenour of his daily labours, which would be deemed rare in the most mechanical pursuits, and might be envied in the mere man of business, loses all semblance of formality in the dignified simplicity of his manners, in the spring and healthful cheerfulness of his spirits. Always employed, his friends find him always at leisure. No less punctual in trifles than steadfast in the performance of highest duties, he indicts none of those small pains and discomforts which irregular men scatter about them, and which, in the aggregate, so often become formidable obstacles both to happiness and utility: while, on the contrary, he bestows all the pleasures, and inspires all that ease of mind in those around him, or connected with him, which perfect consistency, and (if such a word might be framed) absolute *reliability*, equally in small as in great concerns, cannot but inspire and bestow; when this, too, is softened, without being weakened, by kindness and gentleness. I know few men who so well deserve the character which an antient attributes to Marcus Cato, namely, that he was likest virtue, inasmuch as he seemed to act aright, not in obedience to any law or outward motive, but by the necessity of a happy nature, which could not act otherwise. As son, brother, husband, father, master, friend, he moves with firm yet light steps, alike unostentatious, and alike exemplary. As a writer, he has uniformly made his talents subservient to the best interests of humanity, of public virtue, and domestic piety: his cause has ever been the cause of pure religion and of liberty, of national independence, and of national illumination.'—(Vol. i. p. 62.)

Coleridge and Southey first met in the summer of 1794 at Oxford. Southey was at that time an undergraduate at Balliol, and in his twentieth year. Coleridge was two years older, and an undergraduate of Jesus College, Cambridge. Coleridge was then at Cambridge for the second time, after having been discharged by his friends from the regiment in which he had

enlisted; and at the beginning of the long vacation he happened to take Oxford on his way to Wales, where he was going on a pedestrian tour with some Cambridge friends. He was introduced to Southey. Their acquaintance soon ripened into friendship. They had many points of common interest; besides both being poets and philosophers, while all around them were tasking their faculties by academic rule. The young enthusiasm of both had been kindled by the French Revolution. 'Wat Tyler' was written about this time; 'Joan of Arc' had been composed the year before. Both had abjured university orthodoxy, and declared themselves Unitarians. Southey, who had gone to Oxford with a view to the Church, was now on the point of quitting it without a degree, because he had become an Unitarian. Coleridge had imbibed Unitarianism at Cambridge from Friend, who was a Fellow of his college, and he had narrowly escaped rustication the year before for shouting at Friend's trial. The two new friends soon parted. Southey went home to his mother at Bath, bidding good bye to Oxford; Coleridge made his Welsh tour, at the end of which he too was to have gone home to Ottery St. Mary; but instead of this, he diverged to Bristol, and remained there and at Bath, planning with Southey a colony of choice spirits on the banks of the Susquehannah, where all property was to be held in common, and vice and misery to be unknown.

This is the scheme known by the imposing name of Pantisocracy. The original idea was Coleridge's; he had mentioned it to Southey at Oxford, and the scheme was reproduced at Bristol, when the two friends determined on emigration. Southey had found two other companions; George Burnet, an Oxford friend, the son of a Somersetshire gentleman-farmer, and Robert Lovell, a young Quaker residing at Bath. Eight more recruits at least were wanted. Coleridge was to write a quarto volume explanatory of the project: which, besides filling up their numbers, was expected by its sale to augment the colonial exchequer. Ways and means were much needed. 'With regard to pecuniary matters,' Coleridge wrote to a friend whom he was anxious to enlist in the service, 'it is found necessary, if twelve men with their families emigrate on this system, that 2000*l.* should be the aggregate of their contributions; but infer not from hence that each man's *quota* is to be settled with the littleness of arithmetical accuracy.' ('*Biographia Literaria*,' new edition, vol. ii. p. 344.) Southey and Coleridge, who had no money, were to strain every nerve to raise funds by writing. At the end of the long vacation Coleridge returned to Cambridge, to complete a series of 'Translations of Modern Latin

'Poems,' for which he had issued proposals, and had already obtained a large number of Cambridge subscribers: while Southey staid at Bristol to see what he could do with 'Joan of Arc,' and to write more poetry.

Both, in the mean time, had taken steps to provide themselves with one requisite for the founders of a new colony, — a wife. They were engaged to be married to two sisters living at Bath — Edith and Sara Fricker. A third Miss Fricker was already married to their fellow-Pantisocratist, Lovell.

Coleridge went to Cambridge, and published there the 'Fall of Robespierre,' a joint production by himself and Southey; but nothing was done with the projected 'Translations:' they shared the fate of innumerable other projects, and were never finished. At the end of the term he went up to London; and there, in the pleasant society of Charles Lamb and other old Christ's Hospital school-fellows, Miss Fricker and Pantisocracy seemed for awhile forgotten.

'Coleridge did not come back again to Bristol,' Southey writes, 'till January, 1795; nor would he, I believe, have come back at all, if I had not gone to London to look for him: for having got there from Cambridge, at the beginning of the winter, there he remained without writing either to Miss Fricker or myself. At last I wrote to Favell (a Christ's Hospital boy, whose name I knew as one of his friends, and whom he had set down as one of our companions,) to inquire concerning him; and learnt, in reply, that S. T. Coleridge was at the "Cat and Salutation," in Newgate Street. Thither I wrote. He answered my letter, and said that on such a day he should set off for Bath by the waggon. Lovell and I walked from Bath to meet him. Near Marlborough we met with the appointed waggon; but no S. T. Coleridge was therein. A little while afterwards I went to London, and not finding him at the "Cat and Salutation," called at Christ's Hospital, and was conducted by Favell to the "Angel Inn," Butcher Hall Street, whither Coleridge had shifted his quarters. I brought him then to Bath, and in a few days to Bristol.'—(*Cottle*, p. 405.)

Charles Lamb's readers will remember his fond and frequent references to the evenings spent with Coleridge at the 'Cat and Salutation,' when they sat together, reading poetry and 'speculating on Pantisocracy and golden days to come on earth,' and 'drinking egg-hot and smoking Oronooko.' Lamb did not then know the pain, which every additional day of Coleridge's lingering in London was giving to an affectionate and trusting heart at Bath.

Southey, since they parted, had been working earnestly and to some purpose. He and Lovell had published a small volume of poems together; and he had struck a bargain with a Bristol bookseller for the publication of 'Joan of Arc,' such a bargain

as probably was never made before or since, by a young and unknown author for a first epic. The bookseller was Joseph Cottle, the author of the 'Reminiscences:' at that time a bookseller at Bristol, of about four years' standing. Southey, who had already announced 'Joan of Arc' for publication by subscription, was introduced to him by Lovell. On reading some parts of it one evening to Cottle, he was astonished by the generous offer of fifty guineas for it, and fifty copies for his subscribers — more than the subscription list amounted to. Coleridge, on his return, was speedily introduced to their new *Mæcenæ*s; and can have had little difficulty in closing with an offer of thirty guineas, to be paid immediately, for a volume of small poems, a great part of which was still to be written. Besides this, Southey was also to furnish a volume of small poems on the same terms: and some lectures which they gave at Bristol, were well attended and profitable. Pantisocracy seemed now in the ascendant. Coleridge was the first to marry. He married in October, 1795, and retired with his wife to a small cottage at Clevedon, of the humble rent of five pounds a year; this was to be their temporary abode until everything was arranged for emigration to the *Susquehannah*. Southey, meanwhile, was cooling upon the plan; and when he married, a month after Coleridge, he had renounced Pantisocracy. A temporary quarrel, in consequence, ensued.

Southey was married on the morning of the 14th of November, 1795, without the knowledge of his family, no other persons being present than Cottle and Cottle's sister. On the afternoon of the same day he started for Lisbon by way of *Corrunna* and Madrid. He went with his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, who had supplied the place of father to him, had educated him at Westminster and Oxford, and was now chaplain to the British embassy at Lisbon. Southey deposited his wife with Cottle's sisters. He had just corrected the last proof-sheet of 'Joan of Arc,' and left it to be published in his absence. A letter to Cottle from Falmouth before embarkation, explains his clandestine marriage. The conscientious sense of duty, so predominant in it, promised ill for his union with Coleridge, whatever it might do for that with Mrs. Southey:—

'My dear friend,—I have learnt from Lovell the news from Bristol, public and private, and both of an interesting nature. My marriage is become public. You know that its publicity can give me no concern. I have done my duty. Perhaps you may think my motives for marrying (at that time) not sufficiently strong. One, and that of great weight, I believe was not mentioned to you. There might have arisen feelings of an unpleasant nature at the idea of re-



ceiving support from one not legally a husband: and (do not show this to Edith) should I perish by shipwreck or any other casualty, I have relations whose prejudices would then yield to the anguish of affection, and who would then love and cherish, and yield all possible consolation to my widow. Of such an evil there is but a possibility; but against possibility it was my duty to guard. Farewell.'

In six months Southey returned to his deferred honeymoon, and to hear of the success of 'Joan of Arc.' In November, 1796, he went up to London, entered at Gray's Inn, took lodgings at Newington Butts, and began to keep terms and read for the bar. On arriving in town he wrote to Cottle with characteristic energy. But, to combine poetry with law baffled even Southey:—

'I am now entering on a new way of life, which will lead me to independence. You know that I neither lightly undertake any scheme, nor lightly abandon what I have undertaken. I am happy because I have no want, and because the independence I labour to attain, and of attaining which my expectations can hardly be disappointed, will leave me nothing to wish. I am indebted to you, Cottle, for the comforts of my later time. In my present situation I feel a pleasure in saying thus much.

'Thank God! Edith comes on Monday next. I say thank God, for I have never, since my return from Portugal, been absent from her so long before, and sincerely hope and intend never to be again. On Tuesday we shall be settled, and on Wednesday my legal studies begin in the morning, and I shall begin with "Madoc" in the evening. Of this it is needless to caution you to say nothing, as I must have the character of a lawyer; and though I can and will unite the two pursuits, no one would credit the possibility of the union. In two years the poem shall be finished, and the many years it must lie by will afford ample time for correction.

'I have declined being a member of a literary club, which meet at the Chapter Coffee House, and of which I have been elected a member. Surely a man does not do his duty who leaves his wife to evenings of solitude; and I feel duty and happiness to be inseparable. I am happier at home than any other society can possibly make me. With Edith I am alike secure from the wearisomeness of solitude, and the disgust which I cannot help feeling at the contemplation of mankind, and which I do not wish to suppress.'

Disgust at mankind, is strange language, except in the mouth of Swift. It represents a feeling which no sensible man will ever countenance, and which no good man could harbour and be happy: So leaving Southey till he is in better humour with his fellow creatures, we are the less sorry to return to Coleridge in his cot at Clevedon. His nature was not such as to justify us in expecting to find him happy, however favourable his outward circumstances: But, unfortunately, his first year of married life

was clouded by continual uneasiness about the means of living, and by continually changing schemes of subsistence. He had not Southey's determination, perseverance, and self-reliance. The volume of poems, which Cottle had been unwary enough to pay for beforehand, had made little progress when he married; he engaged to furnish copy every day, but every day brought some new excuse for postponing writing till to-morrow, when, of course, nothing should prevent him. After a long series of most amusing notes of this description, and after many delays and disappointments, the long expected volume was, at last, published in the spring of 1796. Before his marriage, Cottle had promised him a guinea and a half for every hundred lines of poetry he might bring him after the volume was finished; and on the strength of this promise Coleridge married. Alas! little did he know himself. He could sketch out books in his head, and compose rapidly in thought, but it was with the utmost difficulty that he could force himself to write. Some of the visions which were floating through his head at the time of his marriage, found their way into a letter to his friend Mr. Poole three days afterwards: —

'I shall assuredly write rhymes, let the nine Muses prevent it if they can. I have given up all thoughts of the Magazine for various reasons. It is a thing of monthly anxiety and quotidian bustle. To publish a magazine for one year would be nonsense; and if I pursue, what I mean to pursue, my school-plan, I could not publish it for more than one year. In the course of half-a-year I mean to return to Cambridge, having previously taken my name off from the University's control; and, hiring lodgings there for myself and wife, finish my great work of *Imitations* in two volumes. My former works, I hope, prove somewhat of genius and of erudition: this will be better, it will show great industry and manly consistency. At the end of it I shall publish proposals for a school.'—(*Biogr. Lit.*, Vol. ii. p. 348.)

None of all this came to pass. In a short time Coleridge found Clevedon too far from men and books, and moved to Bristol. In the beginning of 1796 he projected a weekly newspaper called the 'Watchman,' travelled to most of the chief towns in the manufacturing districts for subscribers, preaching wherever he stayed a Sunday in the Unitarian chapels, and returned to Bristol with a subscription list full of promise. The first number of the 'Watchman' was published on the 1st of March; it was dropped at the tenth number with a loss. The management of a periodical publication was the last thing for Coleridge to succeed in. Soon afterwards, an accidental visit of Mr. Perry to Bristol opened a prospect of profitable

connection with the 'Morning Chronicle,' and Coleridge made up his mind to establish himself in London. This went off. He sustained another disappointment in the loss of a situation, which had been offered him, of private tutor to the sons of Mrs. Evans, a widow lady living in Derbyshire. He had actually gone with Mrs. Coleridge to stay in Mrs. Evans's house. It was then suggested to him, with offers of patronage, to take a house at Derby, and receive pupils; he engaged for a house: but this plan was also given up, why does not appear. At the end of a year of restless and feverish uncertainty, Coleridge settled himself, towards the close of 1796, in a small cottage at Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, adjoining the grounds of Mr. Poole. He had now a child, whom, in the height of his admiration of Hartley's *Metaphysics*, he christened Hartley. At this time, too, his means were increased by receiving as an inmate a Cambridge friend and brother poet, Charles Lloyd, the son of a wealthy Birmingham banker, who had been led by the mere force of love and admiration to propose living with him. Here Coleridge remained till he went to Germany in the autumn of 1798. This is the residence referred to in the beautiful lines to his brother:

'Beside one friend  
Beneath the impervious covert of one oak  
I've raised a lowly shed, and know the names  
Of husband and of father; nor unhearing  
Of that divine and nightly whispering voice,  
Which from my childhood to maturer years  
Spoke to me of predestinated wreaths,  
Bright with no fading colours.'

Mr. Poole was a Somersetshire country gentleman and magistrate, a man of great benevolence, and combining considerable practical talent with a highly cultivated taste: Southey and Coleridge had become acquainted with him accidentally, while they were meditating 'Pantisocracy' at Bristol; and he took a great interest in their fortunes ever afterwards. He had lately circulated among some friends a proposal for a subscription for an annuity for Coleridge; which, by relieving him from actual want, might set his mind more at ease for the prosecution of works worthy of his talents; not succeeding in this, he invited Coleridge to take up his residence in a cottage by his house. To Mr. Poole Coleridge owed three friendships, which had a great effect on his after life; those of William Wordsworth and the two brothers Thomas and Josiah Wedgewood. Wordsworth, at the time of Coleridge's settling at Stowey, was about twenty miles off, at Racedown, in Dor-

setshire; and in the summer of 1797 he moved to a place called Allfoxden, close to Stowey. The two poets rambled together over the Somersetshire hills, discussed the principles of poetry, and planned and produced the famous 'Lyrical Ballads.' Each wrote a tragedy: Coleridge undertook his at the suggestion of Sheridan, who, when it was sent to him, took no notice of it; it was 'Remorse,' and was not published till 1813. Mr. Wordsworth's is still unpublished. Making every allowance for the enthusiasm of youthful friendship, Coleridge's testimony, in a letter to Cottle, of the impression which it made upon him at the time is certainly remarkable; more especially as the warmest admirers of Mr. Wordsworth have never considered his genius dramatic: —

'I speak with heartfelt sincerity and I think, with unblinded judgment, when I tell you that I feel myself a little man by his side, and yet I do not think myself a less man than I formerly thought myself. His drama is absolutely wonderful. You know I do not commonly speak in such abrupt and unmingled phrases, and therefore will the more readily believe me, there are in the piece those profound touches of the human heart, which I find three or four times in the "Robbers" of Schiller, and often in Shakspeare, but in Wordsworth there are no inequalities.'

Through the Wedgewoods Coleridge became acquainted with Mackintosh, and by him was introduced to Stuart, Mackintosh's brother-in-law, then editor of the 'Morning Post;' in consequence of which he afterwards wrote occasional poetry for it. In the beginning of 1798 he received an invitation to settle as an Unitarian minister at Shrewsbury; Thomas Wedgewood hearing of it wrote to dissuade him, and sent him a present of a hundred pounds; but, as the Shrewsbury invitation opened to him for the first time the prospect of a certain income, he determined to entertain it, — and returning Wedgewood his cheque, he went off to Shrewsbury to preach the probation sermon. Among his auditors on that occasion was William Hazlitt, whose father was Unitarian minister at Wem, and who has published a vivid account of the delight and admiration, which the sermon kindled in him. The impression was universal. But the Shrewsbury Unitarians were to be disappointed of their preacher; for the Wedgewoods, bent on securing Coleridge for literature, wrote to him at Shrewsbury, and offered him, if he would come back, an annuity of a hundred and fifty pounds for life. The offer was immediately and gratefully accepted. The first volume of the 'Lyrical Ballads,' containing the 'Ancient Mariner' and a few other small poems by Coleridge, but the greater part of them Wordsworth's, was published by Cottle

in the summer of 1798; and in the autumn Coleridge and Wordsworth set out together for Germany.

'Have you seen,' (writes Southey to Wm. Taylor, Sept. 1798), 'a volume of *Lyrical Ballads*, &c.? They are by Coleridge and Wordsworth, though their names are not affixed. Coleridge's ballad of the "Ancient Mariner" is the clumsiest attempt at German sublimity I ever saw. Many of the others are very fine; and some I shall read upon the same principle that led me through Trissino, whenever I am afraid of writing like a child or an old woman.'

'Such a criticism on the '*Lyrical Ballads*' by one of the '*Lake Poets*' will probably take many of our readers by surprise. But a variance in their tastes, so deeply grounded, ought to prepare us for the converse of this proposition, and for at least an equal indifference on the part of Wordsworth to the poetry of Southey. They do not appear to have yet fallen in one another's way. Their friendship did not begin till some years later, after Southey had settled at Keswick.

From the time Southey had gone over to the law, he seems to have seen or heard little of Coleridge. But they are together again for a few weeks in Devonshire in the autumn of 1799, immediately after Coleridge's return from Germany. The latter had worked hard there; and was now full of a projected '*Life of Lessing*,' for which he had made a large collection of materials, but which, (we might almost say, of course,) was never written. In the mean time Southey, who had previously spent two legal years in London, had been living for the last twelve months at Westbury near Bristol. We make no doubt but that he went up regularly enough to London to eat his Gray's Inn dinners: the evidence that he was prosecuting his poetical studies with a keener sense of his true calling, is more substantial. He had already finished '*Madoc*' and commenced '*Thalaba!*' During his residence at Westbury he acquired an intimate friend in Davy, who had lately come to Bristol as assistant to Dr. Beddoes at the Pneumatic Institution, and was laying there the foundation of future eminence. Southey has commemorated this happy year in one of those pleasant autobiographical prefaces, which give such interest to the collected edition of his poems.

'This was one of the happiest portions of my life. I never before or since produced so much poetry in the same space of time. The smaller pieces were communicated by letter to Charles Lamb, and had the advantage of his animadversions. I was then in habits of the most frequent and intimate intercourse with him, when in the flower and freshness of his youth. We were within an easy walk of each other, over some of the most beautiful ground in that beautiful part of England. When I went to the Pneumatic Institution, he had

to tell me of some new experiment or discovery, and of the views which it opened for him ; and when he came to Westbury, there was a fresh portion of " *Madoc*" for his hearing.'

Coleridge, on rejoining Southey, after so long a separation, would have much to report of his fellow-traveller, Wordsworth ; in return, Southey would have much to relate of his friend Davy. 'He is a miraculous young man,' Southey wrote to William Taylor, 'whose talents I can only wonder at.' Southey was at this time editing an 'Annual Anthology,' and Davy was supplying him with poetry for it. Coleridge and Southey projected, while they were together, a joint poem in hexameters, on Mahomet: the memory of which survives, we suppose, in that striking fragment, beginning,

'Utter the song, O my soul, the flight and return of Mohammed,' &c., one of the few readable attempts of the kind (being only fourteen lines) in the English language. When they next parted, Coleridge went from Devonshire to London to write leading articles for the 'Morning Post;' and Southey to a house that he had taken in the village of Burton, near Christchurch, in Hampshire.

Coleridge spent the next six months in London, engaged in writing for the 'Morning Post,' and in translating 'Wallenstein.' He seems never to have worked so hard as during his residence in Germany, and for several months afterwards. In consideration of his tendency to describe as done that which was only intended, some deduction, perhaps, is to be made from the report he rendered to Mr. Thomas Wedgewood of his present labours:—

'I shall remain in London till April. The expenses of my last year made it necessary for me to exert my industry, and many other good ends are answered at the same time. Likewise, by being obliged to write without much elaboration, I shall greatly improve myself in naturalness and facility of style, and the particular subjects on which I write for money are nearly connected with my future schemes. My mornings I give to compilations, which I am sure cannot be wholly useless; and for which, by the beginning of April, I shall have earned nearly 150*l*. My evenings to the theatres, as I am to conduct a sort of dramaturgy, or series of essays on the drama, both its general principles and likewise in reference to the present state of the English theatres. This I shall publish in the 'Morning Post.' My attendance on the theatres costs me nothing; and Stuart, the editor, covers my expenses in London. Two mornings and one whole day, I dedicate to these essays on the possible progressiveness of man, and on the principles of population. In April I retire to my greater work,—"*The Life of Lessing*."—(*Cottle*, p. 430.)

In another letter from London he gives us the impression made upon him by a visit to the gallery of the House of Commons:—

‘Pitt and Fox completely answered my preformed ideas of them. The elegance and high finish of Pitt’s periods, even in the most sudden replies, is *curious*; but that is all. He argues but so so, and does not reason at all. Nothing is rememberable of what he says. Fox possesses all the full and overflowing eloquence of a man of clear head, clear heart, and impetuous feelings. He is to my mind a great orator; all the rest that spoke were mere creatures. I could make a better speech myself than any that I heard, except Pitt and Fox. I reported that part of Pitt’s speech which I have enclosed in brackets; not that I report *ex officio*, but my curiosity having led me there, I did Stuart a service by taking a few notes. I work from morning to night, but in a few weeks I shall have completed my purpose, and then adieu to London for ever. We newspaper scribes are true galley slaves. When the high winds of events blow loud and frequent, then the sails are hoisted, or the ship drives on of itself. When all is calm and sunshine, then to our oars.’

In the spring Coleridge went to Stowey, and after a short time removed to Keswick, within reach of Wordsworth, who by this time had made out his way to Grasmere. Coleridge was now settled at the Lakes for some years. He continued to write from Keswick for the ‘Morning Post,’ but Mr. Stuart will be believed when he says, very irregularly. We will extract from a letter to Mr. Josiah Wedgewood (Nov. 1. 1800), his own view of his new residence at Keswick, the house which afterwards became Southey’s home for life:—

‘The room in which I write commands six distinct landscapes; the two lakes, the vale, the river and mountains, and mists, and clouds, and sunshine, make endless combinations, as if heaven and earth were for ever talking to each other. Often when in a deep study, I have walked to the window and remained there looking without seeing; all at once the lake of Keswick and the fantastic mountains of Borrowdale at the head of it have entered into my mind, with a suddenness as if I had been snatched out of Cheapside and placed for the first time in the spot where I stood, and that is a delightful feeling,—these fits and trances of novelty received from a long known object. The river Greta flows behind our house, roaring like an untamed son of the hills, then winds round and glides away in the front, so that we live in a peninsula. But besides this ethereal eye feeding, we have very substantial conveniences. Our garden is part of a large nursery garden, which is the same to us and as private as if the whole had been our own, and then too we have delightful walks without passing our garden gates. My landlord, who lives in the sister house, for the two houses are built so as to look like one great one, is a modest and kind man, of a singular character. By the severest economy he has raised himself from a carrier into the possession of

a comfortable independence. He was always very fond of reading, and has collected nearly 500 volumes, of our most esteemed modern writers, such as Gibbon, Hume, Johnson, &c. His habits of economy and simplicity remain with him, and yet so very disinterested a man I scarcely ever knew. Lately, when I wished to settle with him about the rent of our house, he appeared much affected, told me that my living near him, and the having so much of Hartley's company were great comforts to him and his housekeeper; that he had no children to provide for, and did not mean to marry, and, in short, that he did not want any rent from me. This of course I laughed him out of; but he absolutely refused to receive any rent for the first half year, under the pretext that the house was not completely furnished. Hartley quite lives at the house; and it is, as you may suppose, no small joy to my wife to have a good, affectionate, motherly woman divided from her only by a wall.'

Southey's health had, in the mean time, given way under his various and incessant labours; and in the spring of 1800, he sailed, with his wife, for Lisbon, with the intention of spending a year in Portugal. Medical advisers had recommended change to a warmer climate. If an Englishman at that time had had greater choice, Southey nevertheless would probably have chosen Lisbon, for his uncle was still chaplain there; and the thought of writing a History of Portugal had already crossed his mind. A southern climate speedily revived him, and he was soon at work as hard as ever, collecting materials for a Portuguese history, and finishing 'Thalaba,' which he sent home, to be published before his return. Davy, and an old school-friend, Danvers, corrected the press for him. Of his historical researches, he sent an interesting account to W. Taylor:—

'I am up to the ears in chronicles, a pleasant day's amusement; but battles and folios, and heroes and monarchs tease me terribly in my dream. I have just obtained access to the public manuscripts, and the records of the Inquisition tempt me—five folios—the whole black catalogue; yet I am somewhat shy of laying heretical hands upon these bloody annals. The holy office is not dead, but sleepeth. There, however, it is that I must find materials for the history of the Reformation here and its ineffectual efforts. I obtain access through one of the censors of books here, an ex-German divine, who enlisted in the Catholic service, professing the one faith with the same sincerity that he preached the other; a strong-headed, learned, and laborious man, curious enough to preserve his authoritative revisions of all that is permitted to be printed or sold in Portugal. These revisions I have seen, and by this means become acquainted with what is not brought to light. The public library here is magnificently established; the books well-arranged, with ample catalogues, a librarian to every department, and free access to all—without a cloak. The Museum is also shut to all in this the common dress, a good trait of national honesty. The ruin of the priests gave rise to this



foundation.\* Their libraries were all brought to Lisbon, and the books remained as shovelled out of the carts for many years. They are not yet wholly arranged. English writers are very few, scarcely any. But for what regards the Peninsula, for church and monastic history, and the laborious and valuable compilations of the two last centuries, a more complete collection does not probably exist. I regret my approaching return to England, and earnestly wish I could remain six or seven years in a country whose climate so well suits me, and where I could find ample and important occupation. Once more I must return, when my history shall be so far completed as is possible at home, to give it its last corrections here.'

Southey returned to England in July, 1801, with restored health, and a large collection of historical materials. He had had thoughts while in Lisbon, from his experience of the benefits of a warm climate, of going out to the Indian bar, but these were soon dismissed; it would have prevented him from writing the History of Portugal, and this was to be his great work, and passport to posterity. On his return to England, prospects of official preferment, compatible with his literary plans, dawned upon him. 'I have the hope and prospect,' he announces to W. Taylor, 'of visiting Italy in a provident way — as secretary to some legation there — an office of little trouble; with the prospect of advancement. My destination will probably be Palermo; if peace comes, as likely to any of the other states, and as willingly. Ultimately, I look to Lisbon, and certainly to a long absence from England.' In the mean time he was to be with his brother-in-law. 'I am going to Keswick, to pass the autumn with Coleridge — to work like a negro, and to arrange his future plans with my own. He is miserably ill, and must quit England for a warmer climate, or perish. I found letters announcing his determination to ship himself and family for the Azores: this I have stopped; and the probability is that he will accompany me abroad.' But Dublin, and not Palermo, became Southey's destination. As early as November, he was appointed private secretary to Mr. Corry, the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, for one year. He was a stranger to Mr. Corry, but had been recommended to him by Mr. Rickman, afterwards Clerk of the House of Commons, — at that time private secretary to Abbott, secretary for Ireland. Southey had made Rickman's friendship at Burton, while relaxing from his law studies, in the long vacation of 1796. The appointment was limited to a year, that the master and secretary might see how they suited each other before they were further bound. At the end of the year, Southey ceased to be secretary: 'losing,' he writes, 'a foolish

'office and a good salary. The salary I might have kept, if I would have accepted a more troublesome situation, that of tutor to his son. All this was transacted with ministerial secrecy and hints; but with respectful civility,—so much for that.' He had valued the appointment only as giving him a salary, which would place him above the necessity of writing for daily bread, and would leave him time for the careful composition of the works which were to bring him fame. His heart had been all the while in his literary pursuits. Within ten days of his installation as private secretary, he wrote to W. Taylor, projecting a new Review. During his year of office, half of which was spent in London, and the other half in Dublin, he made some progress with the 'Curse of Kehama,' and worked steadily at his History. When he lost his private secretaryship, he found consolation for the loss of income in the sense of freedom. He was now at liberty to bury himself in the country, and pursue his studies in quiet. His first thought was to settle in Wales, and a treaty for a house in the Vale of Neath was all but concluded. Disappointed of this, he took up his quarters for some months at Bristol, where he was always, as it were, at home, and house-hunted in all directions, but without success. The loss of his first and then only child drove him away in August, 1803; he joined Coleridge at Keswick, and did not again move. Greta Hall, Keswick, continued their joint residence till the spring of 1807, when Southey took the house for himself.

The letter, in which he conveyed to his friend W. Taylor the intelligence of his planting himself for a permanence at the Lakes, contained other important news. On the break-up of the administration of 'All the Talents,' Lord Grenville had procured him a pension of 200*l.* a-year. In the following passage, as it is printed in W. Taylor's Life, a blank is left for the name of Wynn; but the blank has been filled up by Mr. De Quincey, in his sketch of Southey, in 'Tait's Magazine.' And it was right to do so; for the fact is equally to the honour of both parties. Mr. Charles Wynn and Southey had been school-fellows and college-companions; and it was the happy privilege of the wealthier friend to help our aspiring student in his early struggles, and place him above want, before he had attained an independence by his own indefatigable labours.

'When the late ministry saw that out they must go, Wynn thought of saving something for me out of the fire; he could only get an offer of a place in the island of St. Lucia, worth about 600*l.* a year. There was no time to receive my answer, but he divined it rightly, and refused.' Instead, one of Lord G.'s last acts was to give me a

pension of 200*l.*, to which the King "graciously assented." You cannot be more amused at finding me a pensioner, than I am at finding myself so. I am not however a richer man than before. Hitherto Wynn has given me an annuity of 160*l.*, which I felt no pain in accepting from the oldest friend I have in the world, with whom my intimacy was formed before we were either of us old enough to think of difference of rank and fortune. But Wynn is not a rich man for his rank; and of course I shall receive this no longer from him, now that it is no longer necessary. Of 200*l.* the taxes have the modesty to deduct 36*l.*, and the Exchequer pays irregularly; he is in luck who has only one quarter in arrear, so Bedford tells me, who has an office there. I therefore lose 16*l.* per year during the war, and gain 20*l.* whenever the income tax is repealed, having the discomfort always of uncertain remittances. It is but wearing a few more grey goose quills to the stump in the course of the year, and in the course of one year I have better hopes than I ever yet had of getting a-head, as you will presently see. The last copy of MS. for "*Espriclla's Letters*" sets off this night on its way to Richard Taylor.

The letter goes on to describe the work he had on hand — an edition of '*Palmerin of England*,' '*Kirke White's Remains*,' the '*History of Brazil*,' (a part, and, in proper order, the last part, of his '*History of Portugal*,' but to be brought out first on account of the interest then felt in South America), and a translation of the '*Cid*.' He had just brought '*Espriclla's Letters*,' and three volumes of '*Specimens of English Poets*,' through the press, to the eve of publication. Besides all this, there was magazine writing. We quote again from the same letter:—

'About a fourth part of the first volume of the *History* (of *Brazil*) is done, and I shall, perhaps, print it volume by volume. Two quartos are the probable extent. I might doubtless obtain five hundred guineas for the copyright; but I will not sell the chance of greater eventual profit. This work will supply a chasm in history. This is not all: I cannot do one thing at a time; so sure as I attempt it, my health suffers. The business of the day haunts me in the night, and, though a sound sleeper otherwise, my dreams partake so much of it as to harass and disturb me. I must always, therefore, have one train of thoughts for the morning, another for the evening, and a book, not relating to either, for half-an-hour after supper; and thus neutralising one set of associations by another, and having (God be thanked,) a heart at ease, I contrive to keep in order a set of nerves as much disposed to be out of order as any man's can be. The "*Cid*" is therefore my other work in hand: I want only an importation of books from Lisbon to send this to the press, and shall have full time to complete the introduction and notes, while the body of the work is printing. It will supply the place of preliminaries to the "*History of Portugal*," and exhibit a complete view of the heroic age of Spain. I had almost forgotten to say, that the reason why you have not received a copy of my *Specimens* is that it is delayed for

some cancels. Lastly, I have to tell you that before the change of ministry took away all my expectations, I was weary of them; and as some arrangements of Coleridge's made it necessary that I should either decide upon removing hence at a fixed time or remaining with the house, I have chosen the latter alternative. Here, then, I am settled,—am planting currant trees, purchasing a little furniture, making the place decent, as far as scanty means will go, and sending for my books by sea, perfectly well contented with my lot, and thankful that it has fallen in so goodly a land.'

Meanwhile, Coleridge had gone to Malta in the spring of 1804, in search of health, leaving his wife and family at Keswick. The office of chief secretary becoming vacant while he was there, Sir Alexander Ball, the governor, appointed him to act until a new secretary came from England. He acted for about eighteen months; the office of treasurer, then associated with the secretarieship, he declined to undertake, losing thereby the half of 1000*l.* a year, the salary of the two offices. He returned to England in 1806, by way of Sicily and Italy. His health had not improved; nor, though he might have deluded himself as to the cause of his sufferings, could any one else, who knew the fatal habit he had contracted, expect improvement from change of climate. He had become an opium-eater before he went to Malta, and he returned an opium-eater still.

None of the various accounts of Coleridge, which have yet been published, enter into any detail concerning the next seven or eight years of his life. Mr. Cottle saw nothing of him between his lecturing at Bristol in 1807 and his coming back to lecture there in 1814; and he tells us only, what he knows himself. Mr. Gillman's unfinished biography, a very meagre performance, gives us no information for this period. Keswick remained Coleridge's nominal residence till 1810: but his absences became frequent, and his returns, as Southey says, more difficult to be calculated than those of a comet. He was often with Wordsworth at Grasmere. He was occasionally in London, lecturing. The 'Friend' occupied him at Keswick and Grasmere during the year 1809 and part of 1810. He had not in the interval become better adapted for the conduct of a periodical than when he failed with the 'Watchman' in 1796; it was brought out very irregularly, managed expensively, and not written so as to please generally. It lingered on through twenty-seven numbers, though Southey had predicted a much earlier demise. Southey writes (Sept. 1809), 'Coleridge has sent out a fourth number to-day. I have always expected every number to be the last; he may, however, possibly go on in this intermitting way till subscribers enough withdraw

‘their names (partly in anger at its irregularity, more because they find it in heathen Greek) to give him an ostensible reason for stopping short.’ In 1810 Coleridge went to London, and lived for a short time with Mr. Basil Montagu; from him he passed on to an old Bristol friend, Mr. Morgan, then residing at Hammersmith. Mr. Morgan removed afterwards to Calne, and Coleridge removed with him; where for some three or four years Mr. Morgan’s house continued to be his home. In 1813, his play of ‘Remorse’ was brought out at Drury Lane, with very great success: so much so, that Lord Byron, who was a great admirer of his genius — placing him and Crabbe at the head of their contemporary poets — was most urgent with him to set about another tragedy. Instead of which, he kept writing a great deal for the newspapers, chiefly for the ‘Courier.’ It was in 1814 that he returned to Bristol, to lecture; here Mr. Cottle becomes again communicative, — and this is the sad part of Mr. Cottle’s book. Coleridge was now the slave of opium; whatever money he made, went at once in the purchase of that destructive poison, to the ruin of his health, his principles, and character; domestic disagreement is a weak word for the inevitable consequences of such habits; he became, in poetic language, a voluntary exile from his family, a wanderer on the face of the earth. We are not of opinion that the private life of every eminent person becomes public property immediately on his death, even though higher objects, than amusement only, may be attained by publication, — for instance, what is familiarly called a moral lesson. But, after the course, Mr. Cottle has taken, there is an end to any question of the kind in the case of Coleridge. There is no longer a possibility of concealment; and, under the circumstances, we are satisfied that his memory will derive far more honour from such a letter as the following, than from any attempts to deny or to distort the published truth. The letter was written in 1814 by Coleridge to one of his oldest and most attached friends, Mr. Wade of Bristol: —

‘Dear Sir, — for I am unworthy to call any good man friend, — much less you, whose hospitality and love I have abused: accept, however, my entreaties for your forgiveness, and for your prayers.

‘Conceive a poor miserable wretch, who for many years has been attempting to beat off pain by a constant recurrence to the vice that reproduces it. Conceive a spirit in hell, employed in tracing out for others the road to that heaven from which his crimes exclude him! In short, conceive whatever is most wretched, helpless, and hopeless, and you will form as tolerable a notion of my state, as it is possible for a good man to have.

‘I used to think the text in St. James, that “he who offended in one point offends in all,” very harsh: but I now feel the awful, the

tremendous truth of it. For the one crime of OPTIM, what crime have I not made myself guilty of! Ingratitude to my Maker! and to my benefactors — injustice! and unnatural cruelty to my poor children! self-contempt for my repeated promise-breach, nay too often actual falsehood!

‘After my death I earnestly entreat that a full and unqualified narration of my wretchedness, and of its guilty cause, may be made public, that at least some little good may be effected by the direful example.

‘May God Almighty bless you, and have mercy on your still affectionate, and in his heart grateful, S. T. COLERIDGE.’—(*Cottle*, p. 394.)

Such was Coleridge’s terrible confession! Southey had addressed two remarkable letters to Cottle on this painful subject, a few months before; recommending earnestly self-restraint, and labour, and returning home.

‘The restraint, which alone could effectually cure, is that which no person can impose upon him. Could he be compelled to a certain quantity of labour every day for his family, the pleasure of having done it would make his heart glad, and the sane mind would make the body whole. I see nothing so advisable for him, as that he should come here to Greta Hall. . . . here it is that he ought to be. He knows in what manner he would be received, — by his children with joy; by his wife, not with tears if she can control them, certainly not with reproaches; by myself only with encouragement.

To Keswick Coleridge would not and did not go; nor to Mr. Poole. He returned to the Morgans. In April, 1816, he placed himself under the care of Mr. Gillman, a surgeon at Highgate, in the hope that he might be broken of his fatal propensity. In Mr. Gillman he found the kindest of friends, and he lived in his house till his death, on the 25th of July, 1834. Mr. Cottle’s reminiscences of Coleridge close with the year 1814: Mr. Gillman’s first volume does not go beyond the time of Coleridge’s coming to reside with him, — so that the particulars of his eighteen years at Highgate are yet to come.

What a different picture will Southey’s biographer have to draw! His life at Keswick was, like all his previous life, one of uninterrupted industry. Year by year his reputation grew, and his humble means, the honest produce of a most conscientious industry. In 1809 he undertook to write the historical part of the ‘*Edinburgh Annual Register*,’ at a salary of 400*l.* a-year; and took a twelfth share of the property, which he expected would return him 40 per cent. So that at last he thought himself well paid for his labours; with ‘a fair prospect (life and health permitting) of beginning in a very few years to get ‘above the world, in the worldly meaning of the phrase.’ In

1813 he was appointed Poet Laureat, Scott having previously declined the honour. From this period his correspondence with Wm. Taylor begins to flag.

Southey survived Coleridge nearly nine years. He died on the 21st of March, 1843; having been for nearly a year before his death in a state of complete unconsciousness. His overworked mind had broken down. Two singular incidents happened to him in his later life. In 1826 he was returned to parliament for the borough of Downton, while abroad, without his consent. On the meeting of parliament he wrote to the Speaker to inform him that he was not qualified as required by law, and could not take the prescribed oaths. Sir Robert Peel, during his short tenure of office in 1835, offered him a baronetcy; which, however, he at once declined, as incompatible with his worldly circumstances. Upon this, Sir Robert conferred on him a pension of 300*l.* a-year. He received it joyfully: it released him from all further necessity of writing for bread. As soon as his current engagements were discharged, by the completion of his edition of Cowper, and of his 'Lives of the British Admirals,' in 'Lardner's Cyclopædia,' he looked forward to devoting himself to his favourite work, the 'History of Portugal.' But time was not granted him for this. Large materials have, doubtless, been left, which the public cannot afford to lose; for the history of Portugal is still a desideratum in our literature. Three volumes from his 'Common Place Book' are now passing through the press; good news for all who relish the 'Omnia' and the 'Doctor.' While in his 'Life and Correspondence,' which will soon appear under the editorship of his son, the Rev. Cuthbert Southey, the lovers of pleasant English prose may make sure of having as agreeable a specimen of unconscious autobiography, in the form of letters, as any in the language.

Other works, also, Southey is known to have meditated through life, and to have been compelled to defer, under the necessity of writing for subsistence; until at last, when he had obtained a competence, too little of life remained to turn to account the materials which he had been long collecting. Among these works were a 'History of the Monastic Orders,' a 'History of English Literature from the beginning of the Reign of Elizabeth,' and a 'History of English Domestic Life.' If, at the age of thirty, or even forty, a wise distribution of bounty had given him the pension, with which it was reserved for Sir Robert Peel to secure the comforts of his old age, how great would have been the gain to our literature! Let the rest be said by his friend Henry Taylor, in the last of those striking essays, his

‘Notes from Life’ :— ‘By a small pension, and the office of Laureat, (yielding together about 200*l.* per annum), he was enabled to insure his life, so as to make a moderate posthumous provision for his family; and it remained for him to support himself and them, so long as he should live, by his writings. With unrivalled industry, infinite stores of knowledge, extraordinary talents, a delightful style, and the devotion of about one-half of his time to writing what should be marketable, rather than what he would have desired to write, he defrayed the cost of that frugal and homely way of life which he deemed to be the happiest and the best. So far it may be said that all was well; and certainly man was never more contented with a humble lot than he. But at sixty years of age he had never yet had one year’s income in advance; and when between sixty and seventy his powers of writing failed, had it not been for the timely grant of an additional pension, his means of subsistence would have failed too. It was owing to this grant alone that the last years of a life of such literary industry as was the wonder of his time, were not harassed by pecuniary difficulties; and at his death the melancholy spectacle was presented of enormous preparations thrown away, one great labour of his life half finished, and other lofty designs which had been cherished in his heart of hearts from youth to age, either merely inchoate or altogether unattempted. We mourn over the lost books of Tacitus and Pliny, and rake in the ruins of Herculaneum to recover them; but 300*l.* a-year,—had it been given in time,—might have realised for us works over the loss of which our posterity may perhaps mourn as much, or more!

“Things incomplete, and purposes betrayed,  
Make sadder transits o’er Truth’s mystic glass  
Than noblest objects utterly decayed.”

The nature of the subject has carried us further into Southey’s letters, as part of our narrative, than we were quite aware: but we cannot close this paper without extracting one letter more from Mr. Cottle’s *Reminiscences*; a very beautiful one, being an answer to Cottle’s expression of his regret that, on retiring from the bookselling business, he had not returned to Southey the copyrights of his early works.

‘My dear Cottle, — What you say of my copyrights affects me very much. Dear Cottle, set your heart at rest on that subject. It ought to be at rest. They were yours; fairly bought and fairly sold. You bought them on the chance of their success, which no London bookseller would have done; and had they not been bought, they could not have been published at all. Nay, if you had not pub-



\*lished 'Joan of Arc,' the poem would never have existed, nor should I, in all probability, ever have obtained that reputation which is the capital on which I subsist, nor that power which enables me to support it.

'But this is not all. Do you suppose, Cottle, that I have forgotten those true and most essential acts of friendship which you showed me when I stood most in need of them? Your house was my house when I had no other. The very money with which I bought my wedding-ring, and paid my marriage fees, was supplied by you. It was with your sisters that I left my Edith during my six months' absence; and for the six months after my return, it was from you that I received, week by week, the little on which we lived, till I was enabled to live by other means. It is not the settling of our cash account that can cancel obligations like these. You are in the habit of preserving your letters, and if you are not, I would entreat you to preserve this, that it might be seen hereafter. Sure I am, that there never was a more generous nor a kinder heart than yours; and you will believe me when I add that there does not live that man upon earth, whom I remember with more gratitude and more affection. My heart throbs, and my eyes burn with these recollections. Good night, my dear old friend and benefactor. — ROBERT SOUTHEY.'

**ART. III.** *An Account of the Measurement of two Sections of the Meridional Arc of India, bounded by the Parallels of  $18^{\circ} 3' 15''$ ;  $24^{\circ} 7' 11''$ ; and  $29^{\circ} 30' 48''$ . Conducted under the Orders of the Honourable East India Company.* By Lieutenant-Colonel EVEREST, F. R. S., &c., late Surveyor-General of India, and his Assistants. London: 1847.

IN an early number of this Journal (Vol. XXI. 1813) an account was given of a Trigonometrical Survey, including the measurement of some arcs of meridian, which had been then recently executed in British India, under the direction of the late Lieutenant-Colonel Lambton. The survey described in that article formed the first portion of a very extensive series of operations, undertaken with the double view of obtaining data for determining the dimensions and figure of the earth, and of forming a basis for the exact topography of India. With occasional intermissions, the survey has been continued to the present time, and besides enriching geography with an immense number of accurately-determined positions, it has given us the measurement of a continuous arc of the meridian upwards of twenty-one degrees in length, stretching from the extremity of the peninsula of India to the vicinity of the Himalaya mountains. This extensive arc—by far the most extensive, indeed, which

has yet been measured on the surface of the earth—is a *datum* of very great importance in physical astronomy, the attainment of which reflects infinite credit, both on the government of India, by whose direction and at whose cost the survey was undertaken and has been carried through, and on the science and ability of the officers who have successively superintended and taken part in its execution. During the time it has been in progress, similar operations have been undertaken in almost every country of Europe, and the ingenuity of the greatest mathematicians and astronomers, as well as of the most skilful instrument makers, has been tasked to devise means of giving increased precision and accuracy to the results. Numerous improvements and refinements have in consequence been introduced into the mode of conducting trigonometrical surveys, most of which have been taken advantage of in the measurement of the two last sections of the Indian arc. Colonel Everest's present work, accordingly, recommends itself to our attention, not only on account of the large addition it makes to the facts upon which our knowledge of the earth's magnitude and figure is founded, but as exhibiting practical geodesy in, perhaps, the highest state of advancement to which it has yet been carried.

The trigonometrical survey of the British possessions in India was begun about the year 1801, under the superintendence of Colonel Lambton, and shortly afterwards an arc of meridian was measured, about a degree and a half in amplitude, proceeding from a base in the neighbourhood of Madras. From one of the triangles belonging to this arc, a longitudinal series was carried westward to Dodagoontah (about 170 miles from Madras) where another base was measured. This last base was made the origin of a new series of triangles, which was extended southward, in the direction of the meridian, until it reached Punnae (lat.  $8^{\circ} 9' 35''$ ), near Cape Comorin. Two bases of verification were measured in connexion with this series, one near the middle, and the other at the southern extremity; and observations for determining the latitudes and azimuths were made at an intermediate station, as well as at the two extremes. The arc of meridian deduced from this triangulation was thus divided into two sections, which form the two first or southern sections of what is now called the *Great Meridional Arc* of India. A few years afterwards the triangulation was resumed at Dodagoontah, and proceeded in the opposite direction, northwards, nearly up the middle of the peninsula, till it reached Namthabad (lat.  $15^{\circ} 6' 0''$ ); and, subsequently, by a further extension, it was carried to Damargida (lat.  $18^{\circ} 3' 15''$ ); near which station, at Beder, in

the valley of the Manjra, a base was measured in 1815. All the operations connected with these measurements have been minutely described by Colonel Lambton in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* and the *Philosophical Transactions*. They were conducted on the same general plan as those of the Ordnance Survey of England. The bases were measured with a steel chain 100 feet in length; the terrestrial angles with a large theodolite, having an azimuth circle of three feet in diameter; and the observations for the celestial amplitudes made with a five-foot zenith sector. At the time the results were published they were considered as equal, in point of accuracy, to those of the great national undertakings of a similar kind which had been carried on in France and England; but Colonel Everest states circumstances which must divest them of any claim to extreme precision; and, although they are still very valuable in a geographical point of view, they are, doubtless, much inferior to those which have recently been obtained, and would scarcely be considered tolerable in the present improved state of practical geodesy.

Colonel Lambton died in 1823, while engaged in extending the Great Arc to the north of Damargida. He had selected a place called Takalkhera for the limit of the next section, and had measured a base near that station, in the valley of the Berar. Colonel Everest, who had been his first assistant since 1818, was appointed to succeed him as superintendent of the survey, and the operations proceeded without interruption. A series of observations with the sector was made at Takalkhera for determining the latitude, and the triangulation continued onwards as far as Kalianpur (lat.  $24^{\circ} 7' 11''$ ). Near this place, in the plain of Seronj, a base was measured in 1824, and observations taken for the latitude. During the latter part of these operations, Colonel Everest's health had suffered severely, and immediately after completing the sector observations, he returned to England on sick leave. A detailed account of all the particulars connected with the two sections which had been measured for the most part under his superintendence, namely, from Damargida to Takalkhera, and from Takalkhera to Kalianpur, was given by him in a former work which was published in 1830, by order of the directors of the East India Company.

Of this publication it is not our purpose to speak at length. Various causes, which are stated by Colonel Everest with great candour, conspired to diminish the credit which the ability displayed in carrying on the operations might otherwise have claimed for the results. Previous to the measurement of the base at Takalkhera, the joints of the standard steel chain had

been found to be covered with rust, the removal of which would necessarily produce some alteration in the length of the standard. The azimuth circle of the great theodolite had been distorted through the effect of an accidental injury, and, with the utmost precautions that could be taken, the single observations sometimes differed from each other as much as thirty seconds. The azimuths had been insufficiently observed through the whole extent of the line; and the amplitudes were not deduced from observations of the same stars at both extremities, but from determinations of absolute latitudes, and liable, therefore, to all the errors of the star-catalogues. In addition to all this, the work had been carried on under extraordinary difficulties and disadvantages. Between Damargida and Takalkhera the arc passes through an extremely unhealthy country; the party suffered greatly from jungle fever, and Colonel Everest himself had been reduced to a state of such extreme exhaustion, that he required to be supported at the instruments while making the observations. Yet the results presented a much better agreement among themselves than was to be expected under such circumstances; and though the repetition of the measurement has disclosed numerous errors, it has shown also that they were of a kind which tended mainly to counteract each other. Their agreement, however, with Colonel Lambton's results was less satisfactory. On computing the length of the Beder<sup>4</sup> base from that at Takalkhera through the series of triangles, the difference was found to be no less than six feet and seven inches, amounting to nearly a foot in the mile, and rendering the existence of grave error in some quarter absolutely certain.

Colonel Everest returned to India in 1830, liberally provided, by the munificence of the East India Company, with instruments and apparatus of every description, in the construction of which the skill of the most experienced artists of the day had been exhausted. Previously to his departure in 1825, he had given directions for carrying on a longitudinal triangulation eastward from the base at Seronj; and, on his return, he found the triangles had reached a point within 100 miles of Calcutta, where it was intended the series should terminate. It was considered expedient to complete this series; and as the triangulation had been pushed to a distance of 700 miles from the Seronj base, he determined to measure another base in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, with a view, not only to the usual verification, but for the purpose of rendering himself and his assistants familiar with the use of the new measuring apparatus. The details of this measurement are not given, nor is it connected in any way with the operations described in the work which is

the immediate subject of the present article. We need, therefore, only state that, in consequence of the impediments which the nature of the country presented both to the triangulation and the measurement of the base, a considerable time elapsed before the work could be completed; and it was not till towards the end of 1832, that Colonel Everest was enabled to turn his attention to the prolongation of the Great Arc.

In entering upon this operation, it was necessary to make a preliminary survey of the country, for the purpose of selecting the stations of the principal triangles. Colonel Everest states that what may be called the elevated *plateau* of central India terminates on the northern side with the high lands in the vicinity of Gwalior, where the valley of the Chambal commences. This valley is bounded on the north by a range of sandstone hills; farther north detached ranges and isolated hillocks occur; but the average level of the country appears to be rather below that of the valley of the Ganges. The last of these natural elevations in the direct line of the meridian is Usira, beyond which they recede to the west; so that, on the eastern flank of the triangulation, it was necessary to place the stations on flat alluvial land, totally destitute of natural elevations. Beyond Dehli, the stations on both flanks were to be selected in the flat lands of the tract called the Doab, comprised between the Ganges and Jumna. This, he observes, 'is a wide extended plain, remarkable for the richness of its soil, its abundant population, the scorching heat of the winds, which blow over it from March to June, the deluging and almost incessant rain which falls in the four succeeding months, the unvarying monotony of its scenery, and the almost deadness of level of its surface.' (P. xiii.)

The Doab is bounded on its northern side by a range of hills, between which and that part of the sub-Himalaya range on which the settlements of Landaor, Masuri, Hatipaon, &c., are situated, is a beautiful valley called the Dehra Dun. Here Colonel Everest resolved to measure a base; and a mountain to the north of it, named Banog, was selected as the site of the last trigonometrical station. But as this was supposed to be too near the Himalayas to admit of celestial observations being made without risk of disturbance from the attraction of that stupendous mountain chain, the station of Kaliana, about seventy miles to the south of it, was finally selected for the northern limit of the arc. The latitude is  $29^{\circ} 30' 48''$ .

Two years were consumed in this preliminary survey, and Colonel Everest describes the duty as the most harassing he had ever been called upon to perform. The selection and determi-

nation of the relative bearings of sites for trigonometrical stations in a country like the Doab, whose surface is a dead level, and its atmosphere so thick, that a ray from a luminous object can scarcely 'carve a passage' for a distance of fifteen or twenty miles, may readily be conceived to be a most troublesome affair. Considerable precision was requisite: for, as it was necessary to erect costly edifices of masonry at each of the principal stations, any defect of position would have been irremediable. Accordingly, two angles of each triangle were determined within a minute of the truth. To effect this a twelve-inch theodolite was raised on a mast, surrounded by a temporary scaffolding, to an average height of thirty feet above the ground, and a blue light displayed from the station which was to be observed at an average height of ninety feet. But the light was scarcely in a single instance visible to the naked eye; and hence it became necessary to carry a minor triangulation between the station at which the theodolite was erected, and that at which the signal was displayed, for the purpose of determining the direction of the ray; and there being generally three or four, and sometimes as many as six stations to be observed from the same site, much care was required in arranging for the successive display of the signals. The ingenious system of 'ray-tracing,' which Colonel Everest contrived and put in practice, is altogether a new feature in trigonometrical surveying.

Considerable difficulty was encountered at the commencement of the undertaking through the want of assistants accustomed to the use of instruments of the class with which he was now provided. He states, that on his return to India there was not an individual connected with his department, on whom he could rely for efficient aid in carrying out any operation with the accuracy and attention to minutiae, which had now become indispensable. It was necessary, therefore, to select and instruct assistants, and to form and train an establishment; and the multifarious duties attached to the office of Surveyor-General of India contributed further to retard the preparations. Fortunately for the progress of the Great Arc, his camp was joined in 1832 by two officers, Captains Waugh and Renny, who entered thoroughly into all his views, and after some experience became excellent observers. These gentlemen took a large part in all the operations connected with the meridional measurement, and their able and zealous co-operation is acknowledged by Colonel Everest in terms alike honourable to the superintendent and his subordinates.

The final operations commenced in November, 1834, with the measurement of the base which had been traced out in the Dehra Dun. The line was measured twice, and the whole of

the season (from November to May) was consumed in the double operation, and in the triangulation for connecting the base with the station of Kaliana. From this point the triangulation along the arc was begun in October, 1835, and at the end of the season it had been carried as far as the Chambal river. In the season of 1836—1837 it reached Kalianpur, the northern limit of the former arc, and in this season the vertical angles were also observed. As soon as the connection was made with the former triangulation, it became an object of great interest to compare the results; and on completing the calculation of the triangles it was found that the length of the Seronj base of 1824 differed from the length derived from the new base on the Dun by nearly  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet. In former times this would have been considered a very satisfactory agreement, seeing that the length of the base is  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and its distance from the new base upwards of 400 miles in a straight line; but Colonel Everest justly considered the difference as indicating a much larger error than ought to exist, regard being had to the precision of the new methods; and, in order to set the question at rest, he resolved to remeasure the old base with the more accurate apparatus he now had at his command. This operation was completed in January, 1838, when it appeared that the length given by the chain measurement of 1824 was too short by nearly three feet, as compared with the new result.

Having now obtained all the data requisite for computing the terrestrial arc between Kaliana and Kalianpur, the determination of the corresponding arc in the heavens, was alone wanting in order to complete the operations connected with this section. Unfortunately, the instruments which had been constructed for this purpose were found, on trial, to require extensive alterations; and as these were then in progress, the observations could not be immediately undertaken. The remainder of the season was accordingly employed in revising the old triangulation round the Seronj base. As the revision proceeded, the necessity of carrying it further became more apparent; and Colonel Everest, having now in the field a most efficient staff, and rightly judging that so favourable an opportunity might never again occur, resolved to remeasure the whole distance from Kalianpur to Damargida, and thereby efface every vestige of suspicion from that section of the Great Arc which depended on his former operations. This was an energetic proceeding, seeing it involved a large expenditure which had not been sanctioned by the Government; but it was one which all astronomers will applaud; for it cannot be doubted that the remeasurement of this suspected portion of the former work has conferred on the

meridional arc of India a scientific value many times greater than it would have possessed, if he had limited his operations, as was at first intended, to the measurement of the northern section. The triangulation was executed by Captains Waugh and Renny, and was completed by the end of March, 1839. In order that this section should be rendered complete in every respect, Colonel Everest now resolved to measure a base of verification at the southern extremity. On examination it was found that the old Beder base, which was measured by Colonel Lambton in 1815, could only be partially traced. A new alignment was therefore selected, and measured by Captain Waugh in October, 1840, Colonel Everest having returned in the previous year to Hatipoon to superintend the alterations of the astronomical instruments, and prepare for the observation of the amplitudes.

With the measurement of this base the geodetical operations were brought to a conclusion. The celestial amplitudes corresponding to the terrestrial arcs were determined by means of observations of the altitudes of stars near the zenith, made simultaneously at Kaliana and Kalianpur in the winter of 1839-40, and by similar observations at Kalianpur and Damargida in the following winter; Colonel Everest and Captain Renny being the observers at the northern station, and Captain Waugh at the southern, in both cases.

It will be seen from the above brief sketch of the proceedings, that the meridional arc now measured by Colonel Everest consists of two distinct sections, each complete in itself, and furnishing the means of determining the length of a degree of latitude, or the curvature of the meridian if compared with some other arc. The first or northern section, Kaliana—Kalianpur, is about 371 miles in length; the second, Kalianpur—Damargida, about 426 miles; and the two, taken together, form a continuous line of about 797 miles, and correspond to an arc of  $11^{\circ} 27' 33''$  of the celestial meridian. The results are entirely independent of any previous operations, excepting that the height above the sea and the longitude of Damargida, the southern limit, are derived from the observations of Colonel Lambton.

We have stated that the apparatus used for the measurement of his bases by Colonel Lambton, was a steel chain 100 feet in length. The great length of the chain promised some advantages; but it is liable to various objections, of which the principal one would seem to result from the impossibility of ascertaining, with the requisite precision, the temperature of its different parts while it is in actual use. Accordingly, General Colby, when about to undertake the survey of Ireland, resolved



to abandon the chain method (till then used in the Ordnance Survey), and to employ an apparatus in the construction of which he had ingeniously contrived to take advantage of the unequal expansions of different metals, so as to eliminate the effects of variations of temperature altogether. Colonel Everest determined to adopt the same method in India; and he has given a very minute description of the apparatus, as well as of the manner in which he applied it. The details are somewhat complicated, but a few words will suffice to give an idea of its construction.

The essential parts of the apparatus consist of two similar metallic bars, one of brass and the other of iron, about ten feet long, placed side by side, and firmly united at the middle to a connecting bar of iron, which keeps them a little more than an inch apart. Passing through apertures wrought in both bars at their extremities, and rotating on double conical pivots so as not to interfere with the free expansion of the bars, are two flat iron tongues, about six inches in length, one end of each projecting about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches on the side of the iron bar at right angles. At the temperature of  $62^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit (the standard for British measures) the two bars are of precisely the same length, and the two tongues are exactly perpendicular to the direction of the bars. Suppose the temperature to receive an increase, both bars will be lengthened, but the brass bar more than the iron bar, in consequence of which the tongues will be thrown out of their perpendicular position, and inclined *inwards*. On the contrary, if the temperature falls below  $62^{\circ}$ , both bars will be shortened, but the brass bar will now be the shorter of the two, and the tongues will be inclined *outwards*. This being understood, it will be manifest that there is a certain point on the tongue at which the absolute expansion of the bars is just compensated by the inclination of the tongue; and consequently if a fine dot be marked on each tongue at this neutral point, the distance between the two dots will remain unaltered, provided the relative expansions of the two bars remain the same at all temperatures. The situation of the neutral point depends on the length of the bars, the distance between them, and the relative expansions of the two metals, but its exact position is determined experimentally. The parts are so arranged that the distance between the dots or compensation points is exactly, or as nearly as the artist can make it, ten feet.

In the actual measurement several sets of bars are necessary; six were used in the present case. They are supported on brass rollers, and enclosed in deal boxes, from which the tongues only project; and the boxes are arranged one before the other,

so that the dots on all the tongues are precisely in the line of the base, or in a line parallel to it. From the construction it is manifest that the compensation points at the adjacent ends of two sets of bars cannot be brought into coincidence; and it is necessary that they should not be brought so near to each other as to cause risk of derangement from the end of one box being accidentally moved against another. An interval of some inches is accordingly left between the points, the measurement of which is effected by an exceedingly ingenious microscopic apparatus, also constructed on the principle of compensation, and so contrived that the distance between the focal points of two microscopes shall not be altered by changes of temperature. This apparatus is placed over the contiguous ends of every two sets of bars, and when the whole is in proper adjustment, the optical axes of the microscopes are vertical, and in a plane passing through the line of the base, and the dots on the two tongues are respectively bisected by the cross wires in the foci of the microscopes; in which state of things the distance between the dots is just equal to the constant distance between the foci of the microscopes, which for convenience of calculation is made equal to six inches. A small telescope placed between the two microscopes (the three optical axes being in the same plane), with a delicate level attached at right angles to its axis, gives the means of adjusting a fine dot on a plate of metal vertically under the centre of the apparatus, so that when the measurement has been suspended, or when it is necessary to alter the level of the measuring bars, the operation can be resumed exactly from the point at which it was left off.

General Colby's apparatus is undoubtedly entitled to the praise of extreme ingenuity; but on account of the complexity of its construction, extreme care must be exercised in using it; and whether it possesses sufficient advantage in point of accuracy over simpler methods, to compensate the great additional trouble • it gives rise to, is a question on which those only who have a practical knowledge of such matters are entitled to speak. Colonel Everest's opinion, and that of no geodist can have greater weight, is not favourable. He observes, 'If, indeed, it had been possible by means of this new application to set aside all regard to the variations of temperature and their consequences, there would have been much less reason for objection — the notion of being able to measure a line at pleasure under all circumstances, with an accuracy needing no correction, and which would have been perfectly independent of physical changes, is not only a magnificent conception as far as theory is concerned, but would in reality have been deserving

‘of a great increase of trouble and precaution by way of an offset to the saving of computation which it caused; but it would be a great mistake to suppose that this has been the case, for the practical difficulties are such as to render not only the entire elimination of errors, but even their reduction to the rejectaneous state a hopeless expectation, and the result has been, that instead of one mass of simple corrections, we are now burdened with an overwhelming accumulation of minute particles of computation, each of which tends in its turn to fritter away the time, and occupy the attention of two skilful computers.’ (P. c.)

The impracticability of maintaining an invariable distance between the neutral points under all changes of physical condition, deprives the apparatus at once of its peculiar theoretical advantages; and it is, moreover, liable to this serious objection, that the length of the base is not found in terms of a single standard, but in terms of two different standards, and these even (as the practice has been) constructed of different metals. The compensation bars are referred to a standard iron bar of ten feet, and the microscopic apparatus, in respect of which any error is of precisely the same importance as if it belonged to the compensation bars, is compared with a standard brass scale of six inches. Now this not only multiplies the number of comparisons to be made between the measuring apparatus and the standards, but also involves the determination of the ratio of the brass scale to the iron bar—a ratio which it is difficult to determine with the requisite precision in the first instance, and which can only be assumed to be known afterwards on the supposition that the rates of expansion of the two standards remain constant.

But, after all, the apparatus must be judged of by the exactness of the results, and this, fortunately, can be tested in various ways. The Dehra Dun base is nearly  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles in length. The ground is undulous and by no means favourable; the line is twice intersected by the stream of the Asan; and the height above the sea level of one end of it is 186 feet greater than that of the other. The base was measured twice, first from west to east, and then in the opposite direction. After all reductions the two results were as follows:—Length in feet at the level of the sea—by the measurement, 39183·97329; by the remeasurement, 39183·77357; difference, 0·19972, corresponding to two inches and (nearly) four-tenths of an inch. Another test was applied with an equally satisfactory result. The entire line was divided into three sections, and the two end sections deduced from the middle one by triangulation. The discrepancies between the measured and computed distances were +0·333 of an inch in

the one case, and  $-0.078$  of an inch in the other; so that the whole base, deduced in terms of the middle section, differed from the length actually measured by scarcely more than a quarter of an inch.

The other two bases, at Scronj and Beder, were measured exactly in the same manner as that on the Dehra Dun. The Scronj base (nearly  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles) was not remeasured, nor was any part of it deduced by triangulation from another, so that there are no direct means of verification — a circumstance which we think is to be regretted; but in the case of the Beder base (nearly 8 miles) the measurement was tested by dividing the whole length into three sections, and computing the two end sections from the middle one by a triangulation. The difference was found to amount only to an inch in the one case, and about two-thirds of an inch in the other; the computed length exceeding the measured length in both cases.

The very close agreement of the results of these different processes affords a convincing proof, not only of the sufficiency of the apparatus, but of the extreme care bestowed on all the details of the measurement. Every precaution was, in fact, taken to secure the most scrupulous accuracy. The whole operation was carried on under tents. The measuring bars were frequently compared with the standard iron bar before and after the operation; the microscopic apparatus was likewise compared with the standard brass scale; and (with the exception of the first set) all the comparisons were made under tents, and in circumstances as nearly similar as possible to those which existed while the actual measurement was in progress.

In order to compare the results of the present with those of other measurements, it is necessary to ascertain the exact relation of the units in terms of which the distances are expressed. At present this is a matter of much difficulty; for since the destruction of the legal representative of the standard of English lineal measures in the fire which took place at the Houses of Parliament in 1834, the term *foot* can scarcely be said to have a definite signification. Colonel Everest has, however, taken care to preserve the means of ascertaining the relation of the unit of his measures to the standards of other countries, or to any standard which may hereafter be sanctioned by the legislature. The measuring bars, as we have seen, were carefully compared with a certain iron bar, on which the artist had placed two dots to define a distance intended to be ten feet (of what scale is not said), and the microscopic apparatus, with a brass scale, intended, in like manner, to represent a distance of six inches, at the temperature of  $62^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit respectively. These two stand-

ards, therefore, — the 10-foot bar and the 6-inch scale — are the models or representatives of a multiple and submultiple of the unit in terms of which the results of the measurement are given, and it is to them that an ultimate appeal must be made. When about to leave India, Colonel Everest caused them to be deposited, for safe custody, in the garrison at Agra, where they now remain, and where we trust they will be religiously preserved. But before they were thus disposed of, they had been very carefully compared with another bar and scale, similar to them in all respects, and the duplicates, or copies, thus obtained were brought to England, and forwarded to the Ordnance Map Office at Southampton for the purpose of comparison with the standards of the Ordnance Survey. Some comparisons are given in the present work from which we may conclude that the standards of the Indian arc are known in terms of the Ordnance standards. These last, as we now know from Captain Yolland's recently published and interesting account of the measurement of the Lough Foyle base in Ireland, have been compared with the standards of the English arc from Dunnose to Clifton; but we are not aware of any experiments having been yet undertaken for the purpose of directly ascertaining their relation to those of the French and other continental surveys. For the present, therefore, any result deduced from the combination of Colonel Everest's arcs with those of other countries must be considered as only provisional; though the corrections which may subsequently be required will probably be exceedingly minute.

For the measurement of the horizontal angles two large theodolites were used, one of which had been made expressly for this survey by the celebrated Troughton, and is described by Colonel Everest as the *capo d'opera* of that renowned artist. This superb instrument had an azimuth circle of 34 inches in diameter, and by means of five microscopic micrometers the divisions could be read to one or two tenths of a second. It carried a telescope of 39·4 inches focal length; the attached vertical circle was 18 inches in diameter; and every contrivance had been applied to provide for accuracy and facility of adjustment, which the genius of the artist could devise. Nevertheless, when it was first brought into the field, after the measurement of the base on the Dun, it was found so faulty in its construction, that the angles taken with it could not be depended upon to within fifty seconds of the truth. In the hands of a person of less energy and resource, such a discovery would have given rise to great inconvenience and delay; but Colonel Everest no where appears to greater advantage than in dealing with a de-

fective instrument. With the assistance of an ingenious native artist, Seid Mohsin, who rendered excellent service on this and other important occasions, and to whom indeed he acknowledges himself to have been mainly indebted for the successful issue of his plans, he immediately proceeded to subject the instrument to a thorough examination; and after making various alterations in its interior arrangement, he ultimately succeeded in rendering it 'as perfect in performance as it was beautiful in appearance.' The other theodolite, originally made by Cary, was a fac-simile of Ramsden's celebrated instrument, used in the Ordnance survey of England. An accidental blow, which it received on the occasion of raising it to the top of a pagoda at Tanjore, in 1808, had damaged the azimuth circle and tangent screw; and although Colonel Lambton had been at great pains in attempting to repair the injury, its performance after that time had never been satisfactory. In its existing state it could not be used for the present measurement; but as it was seen that there would be a great advantage in having two principal instruments in the field, Colonel Everest resolved to attempt its re-construction. The plan which he designed for this purpose involved the casting and graduation of a 3-foot azimuth circle, and, in fact, the renewal or alteration of every part of a first-class instrument, with the exception of the levels and lenses. All this was executed at Calcutta by the Company's instrument maker, to his entire satisfaction. 'I must,' he remarks, 'do the artist the justice to say that, for excellence of workmanship, accuracy of division, steadiness, regularity, and glibness of motion, and the general neatness, elegance, and nice fitting of all its parts, not only were my expectations exceeded, but I really think it is as a whole as unrivalled in the world as it is unique.'

Great importance was attached to the construction of the stations. Throughout the Doab it was necessary to erect artificial structures of sufficient height to overtop the trees, and of sufficient solidity to afford a firm support to the theodolite. These were of a very substantial kind — square towers of solid masonry, about fifty feet in height, with walls five feet in thickness at the foundation, and two at the top. A stone slab, supported on two transverse stone beams, formed the floor on which the instrument stood; and the stage for the observers was entirely disconnected in order to avoid vibration while the observations were going on. The centre of the station was carefully defined on a plate of metal let into a stone, and sunk in the ground for further security; and the theodolite and signals were in all cases accurately adjusted over the centre.

The sites of the stations were also carefully selected with a view to *well-conditioned* triangles. It was a general rule, steadily adhered to, that no angle of any triangle should be less than  $30^{\circ}$ . The sides of the triangles may be stated to be from ten to twenty-five miles. In a very few instances only are they found so much as thirty miles.

In Colonel Lambton's surveys, masts, flagstaves, and other opaque objects, were used as signals. During the healthy season in India, the state of the atmosphere is generally such that objects of this nature cannot be steadily bisected, even at moderate distances, and very frequently they remain invisible for days together. At the beginning of the rainy season the atmosphere, on the contrary, possesses a degree of transparency seldom equalled in our higher latitudes; and accordingly this season was invariably chosen for commencing field operations. The consequence is described by Colonel Everest to have been a reckless waste of life and health, besides an amount of discomfort and suffering which must have rendered the service nearly unsupportable. It was found out, however, that luminous objects not only form far better signals, but succeed best in the dry and healthy season when the others are altogether unserviceable. Under Colonel Everest's superintendence the system was changed, and field operations were entirely suspended during the rainy season. The heliotrope was used for day observations: it affords an exquisite object for bisection, but as it must be adjusted by signals from the observer, it was only available for short distances. Reverberatory lamps, with argand burners, and enclosed in air-tight cases, were generally used by night; and when these were found to be too feeble, recourse was had to blue lights burned at regulated intervals. Means were provided to prevent any rays from the luminous object reaching the observer at the telescope, excepting those which passed over the centre of the station. With the heliotrope and blue lights it was found to be scarcely possible to arrange for the observation of more than one signal at the same time; and hence the usual mode of proceeding was to take the angles between a mark of reference set up at some convenient distance from the station where the instrument was placed, and the signals displayed from each of the surrounding stations successively and independently. In order to eliminate instrumental errors and obtain results of uniform precision, the angles were measured from eight different zeros on the circle, the established rule being 'to observe three times at each zero with the face left, and as many with the face right, then to change the zero three times by  $9^{\circ}$  each time, and at each position go through a like operation, whereby it is evident that

'every ninth degree will in turn fall under one or other of the  
'microscopes.'

Of the numerous improvements recently made in geodesy, one of the most important, in reference to precision of result, is that of observing every station visible from the one at which the instrument is placed, and taking all the observed angles into consideration in computing the distances. When one side and two angles of a triangle are known, the geodesician is in possession of all the data he requires for computing the remaining parts; but in practical geodesy the measurement of the third angle is exceedingly important, because every observation being affected with less or more of error, it gives the means of applying corrections from the condition that the sum of the three angles, measured respectively on the horizon of each station, is a known quantity. In the surveys carried on about the end of the last and beginning of the present century, the practice began to be adopted of observing the three angles, and adjusting the observations so as to satisfy the above condition. But this is only one of sundry other conditions which spring up when more angles are measured than are just necessary for determining the sides, — for example, when two adjacent angles, and also their sum, have been observed, or when lines drawn to represent the paths of all the observed rays, form polygons with their diagonals. In all such cases the observed angles are connected with each other by certain geometrical relations, which would be all satisfied if the observations were perfectly exact; and the problem which the computer has to solve is, to determine the corrections which must be applied to the observed angles in order that they may satisfy the whole of the relations simultaneously, and at the same time fulfil the condition of making the smallest possible alteration in the observed values, — the test of which is that the sum of the squares of the applied corrections is a minimum. A general solution of this problem, which it will be readily understood is one of great difficulty, is obtained by means of a laborious and highly artificial though systematic process of computation, for which we are mainly indebted to the late Professor Bessel, and an admirable example of its application is given in the account of the measurement of a degree in East Prussia which was published in 1838. Colonel Everest was not acquainted with this very satisfactory method of correcting the errors of observation; but he has the merit of having been the first English geodist who attempted to grapple fairly with the difficulty, and make use of the whole of the observations without exception in the computation of the triangles. His method, which was explained in detail in his first publica-



tion, is very ingenious; and though it is less complete than Bessel's, and fails in fulfilling some of the requisite conditions, it must still be regarded as a considerable improvement on the methods which, up to that time, had been followed in the principal trigonometrical surveys of Europe.

For computing the sides of the triangles, the theorem of Legendre was used. Of the sufficiency of the methods, and the great precision of the whole of the geodetical operations, the most satisfactory proof is found in the agreement, almost absolute, in the lengths of the two bases at the extremities of the arc, as found by actual measurement and by computation through the series of triangles from the one near the middle. The results are as follows:—the length of the Dehra Dun base, brought out by computation from the Seronj base, was found to be 39183·273 feet, and by the actual measurement, 39183·873 feet, the difference being 0·600, or six-tenths of a foot; that is to say, a little more than seven inches, the distance between the two bases being about 430 miles. Again, the Beder base brought out by computation from the Seronj base was found to be 41578·178 feet, and the length given by the measurement was 41578·536, the difference in this case being only 0·358 parts of a foot, or a little more than four inches, the distance between the two bases being about 426 miles, and the calculation made through 85 principal triangles. The agreement is certainly remarkable; though when we consider the excellence of the instruments made use of, and the extreme care and attention which appear to have been bestowed on even the minutest details of the operation, we should be warranted, notwithstanding the adverse circumstances, in anticipating a degree of precision at least equal to that which had been obtained in any similar measurement which has yet been executed.

Observations for determining the azimuths, or bearings of the sides of the triangles, were made at seven different stations (including the two limits) on the northern section of the arc, and at eight on the southern. This is a part of the operation which is attended with much practical difficulty, and a perfect agreement between the azimuth found by direct observation at one station, and computed from observations made at another, is seldom obtained; because the calculation assumes the curvature of the earth to be known, and the observations are liable to be influenced by local attraction. In the Ordnance survey, as well as in Colonel Lambton's operations in India, it had been the practice to observe the angle between a referring mark and the pole-star at the time of its greatest elongation on either side of the meridian; but this method scarcely admits of all the requi-

site verifications, at least in the climate of India, where stars can scarcely ever be well observed by day, and where, consequently, only one maximum elongation can in general be observed in the twenty-four hours. The method which Colonel Everest adopted, was to select a considerable number of stars, within  $8^{\circ}$  of the pole, and so situated in respect of right ascension, that one or more of them could be observed almost daily at the time of their greatest elongations on both sides of the meridian. By this means, instead of one observation a day, a sufficiently numerous series was obtained *near* the time of greatest digression, the exact instant of each observation being noted by means of a chronometer, for the purpose of computing the necessary reduction. In the southern section the greatest difference between any observed and computed azimuth amounted only to  $2''.66$ ; but in the northern section there was more irregularity. At Kaliana, the difference in respect of one of the stations was  $4''.734$ ; and at Banog, within 50 miles of the Himalayas, it amounted to no less than  $20''.156$ . Large as this difference is, it is by no means singular. Delambre found so much discordance in his azimuths, that he considered it necessary to suppose the terrestrial parallels to be elliptical; and very recently General Colby observed a discrepancy of  $3''$  in the latitude of Dunnose, in the Isle of Wight, as determined with a zenith sector at two stations within a mile of each other. Similar anomalies occur in all surveys; and no difficulty which the geodist has to encounter occasions greater embarrassment.

The relative heights of the stations were determined by means of observations of their vertical angles, as seen from each other, made with 18-inch altitude and azimuth circles. The observations were reciprocal; that is to say, an observer was placed at each of two stations whose difference of altitude was to be found, with a heliotrope or lamp by the side of his instrument, and each observed the angle between the zenith and the signal of the other at the same instant of time, according to preconcerted signals. This method is perhaps the only one which can be depended on in any country, but especially in India, where the effects of terrestrial refraction are so great and irregular. Some of the phenomena observed in the course of the survey through the Doab were very extraordinary and remarkable. According to the received theory, when reciprocal observations are made, the subtended angle (*i.e.* half the sum of the depressions observed at each end of a ray) ought to be the same whether the observed objects appear to be rising, or stationary, or falling. This, however, was not found to be the case in practice, for sometimes it happened that when the object

was rising or falling, 'the amounts of subtended angles observed from the several pairs of observations taken one after another, exhibited a very near approach to a regular arithmetical series.' Instances also occurred 'wherein of two stations, 20 miles and upwards asunder, the observed vertical angle and its reciprocal were both elevations at the same instant.' Lateral refraction was also manifested to an embarrassing extent. 'We see, in fact,' says Colonel Everest, 'both by day and night, that this cause is perpetually in operation, for the small disk of the reverberatory lamp, which is only 12 inches in diameter, and in a clear settled atmosphere is reduced to a luminous point, swells out sometimes for nights in succession into a broad ill-defined disk, subtending occasionally two minutes of the horizon, and vibrating more like a sheet of fire than an object intended for accurate bisection, while the visible disk of the heliotrope, formed by limiting the rays to an aperture of two inches diameter, is even wilder and more straggling.' (P. cxix.)

In all the trigonometrical operations which have been carried on in this country and India, it has been considered a point of great importance to make the observations in such a manner as to avoid, whenever it is possible, the necessity of calculation and reduction. But in no case has this principle been carried out so fully as in the present measurements. Thus, the bases were measured with compensation bars to avoid reduction for the expansion of metals; the instruments and the signals were carefully adjusted over the centres of the stations, in order that there might be no necessity for reduction on account of eccentric position; and the relative heights of the signals were determined by simultaneous observations at both ends of the ray, in the hope of eliminating the effects of refraction. Following out this principle, Colonel Everest resolved (as Bouguer had done in Peru) to determine the amplitudes of the celestial arcs by simultaneous observations of the zenith distances of stars at both extremities, thereby avoiding all sources of error depending on the mean places or proper motions of the stars observed, and on the constants used in their reduction; in short, rendering the circumstances identical at both stations with the exception of refraction and instrumental errors. For this purpose he had been provided with two astronomical circles, which, it was presumed, would be fully adequate to the nicety and importance of the determination. The instruments, which were precisely alike, had double vertical circles of 3 feet in diameter, carrying telescopes of 54 inches in focal length; and as they had been made expressly for the purpose in London, no suspicion was entertained of their efficiency until they were wanted for use. Great, therefore,

was his dismay when, on setting them up for trial in the observatory at Kaliana, they were found to vibrate to such an extent that no object could be intersected with any degree of accuracy. After much time had been lost in ineffectual attempts to remedy their defects, the Company's instrument maker was sent from Calcutta to his assistance, when he learned, for the first time,\* that the vibratory motion of which he complained was considered inherent in that class of instruments, as they were what is termed *top-heavy*, and therefore to a certain extent unsteady; that the inventor had done all his skill could suggest to remedy the evil; and, in short, that there was no rational prospect of succeeding in the attempt to give them stability. The artist, also (whose ability had been proved in the reconstruction of the theodolite), whether from the hopelessness of the case or other reasons, refused to undertake the suggested alterations, or to give any assistance whatever. Colonel Everest's energy and self-reliance in these embarrassing circumstances are worthy of all admiration. 'As it did not,' he coolly remarks, 'appear essential that the instruments should be top-heavy, I determined that they should be rather bottom-heavy, and that at any rate I would not sit quietly down with my arms folded, to make bad observations, while there was a fair chance of devising a method for making good ones.' (P. xxxii.) The method which he devised was a bold one, involving among other alterations the removal of the columns and the azimuth axes and circles, and the substitution of others of a stronger and less yielding description. Models of the different parts were prepared and sent to Calcutta, where castings were made and transmitted to him at his station at Hatispaon. But the graduation of the 2-foot azimuth circles, which he had caused to be made of cast-iron, threatened to interpose an insuperable obstacle; no one of the party, himself excepted, having the slightest idea of the manner in which this operation is usually performed. At length he hit upon the expedient of copying the divisions of the original brass circles, on to the new iron ones. Of the means by which this was accomplished it would here be out of place to attempt an explanation; it is sufficient to say that they appear to have been attended with perfect success, and when the whole of the alterations were completed, he had the satisfaction of finding the instruments to be fully equal to the expectations he had formed of them when the order for their construction was first given to the makers.

For deducing the amplitude of the northern section thirty-six stars were selected, half of them to the south and the other half to the north of the zeniths of both stations, but none of them having a zenith distance exceeding  $5^{\circ}$  from the nearest

vertical. The observations were not, as was intended, strictly simultaneous, Captain Waugh having commenced his observations at Kalianpur a few nights before the time agreed on, and Colonel Everest and Captain Renny, who observed at Kalia, having met with some interruption from unfavourable weather. For the southern section thirty-two stars were observed at Kalianpur and Damargida, and in this case the observations, with scarcely an exception, were literally simultaneous. Precise rules were laid down with respect to the mode of observing, reading the microscopes and levels, changing the zero points, &c.; and every necessary precaution appears to have been taken to obtain results free from instrumental errors. The mean of all the observations gave the amplitude of the arc Kalia—Kalianpur equal to  $5^{\circ} 23' 37'' \cdot 051$ , and that of the arc Kalianpur—Damargida equal to  $6^{\circ} 3' 55'' \cdot 973$ ; and it was remarked that in the former case all the stars to the south of the zenith gave a greater result than those to the north, and that in the latter, while there was a like uniform discrepancy between the results of the northern and southern stars, those to the south of the zenith now gave the lesser amplitude. Colonel Everest apprehends the existence of some slight discrepancy between the standards with which the barometers and thermometers were compared, which, if its amount should hereafter be determined, will render necessary some correction of the refractions, and consequently of the amplitudes.

There can be little doubt that Colonel Everest's method of determining the amplitudes is a sufficient one; but considering the great precision with which the apparent motions of stars are now known, it does not seem that simultaneous observations are essential; nor, seeing the observations at the extremities of the arc must be made with different instruments and by different observers, do we think they even afford a chance of greater probable accuracy. We feel scarcely reconciled to the abandonment of the zenith sector, and are disposed to think that if Colonel Everest had adopted the simpler method of determining the latitudes by transit observations in the prime vertical, as practised by Struve and Bessel, he would have obtained an equally good result, while he would have been spared all his anxiety and trouble in consequence of the original defects of the circles. Of the necessity for the alteration of the instruments, we can of course form no opinion excepting from his own statement.

We are now enabled to state the results of the operation, as respects the length of the meridional degree. The terrestrial distance on the meridian between the parallels of the stations at Kalia and Kalianpur, deduced from the mean of the two bases,

and reduced to the level of the sea, was 1961157·117 feet; and that between the parallels of Kalianpur and Damargida, also from a mean of the two bases, and reduced to the same level, 2202926·196 feet. Comparing these distances with the above celestial arcs, the length of the meridional degree is found from the northern section to be 363606 feet, or 68·865 miles, at the middle latitude  $26^{\circ} 49'$ , while from the southern section it is found to be 363187 feet, or 68·785 miles, at latitude  $21^{\circ} 5'$ ; the results thus agreeing with theory in indicating an increase of the length of the degree as the distance from the equator is increased.

With respect to the figure of the earth—a safe conclusion cannot be drawn from these results alone; it is necessary to compare arcs more remote from each other. Colonel Everest has entered into this subject at considerable length, and deduced elements of the earth's figure, not only from the comparison of his two arcs *inter se*, but also from a comparison of each of them separately, and of both taken as one, with Lambton's arc from Punnæ to Damargida, with the French arc from Formentera to Dunkirk, with the Russian arc from Jacobstadt to Hochland, with the English arc from Dunnose to Clifton, with the Peruvian arc, and with Svanberg's Swedish arc. A few of his results may be mentioned; and we may premise that the ellipticity of the earth, as deduced by Bessel a few years since, from a proper combination of *all* the meridional measurements then available, is between  $\frac{1}{299}$  and  $\frac{1}{300}$ . Now the comparison of the two sections of Colonel Everest's arc gives the ellipticity equal to  $\frac{1}{192}$  (omitting decimals). The comparison of the northern section with the English arc gives  $\frac{1}{337}$ ; while the southern section, compared with the English, gives  $\frac{1}{304}$ . The whole arc, Damargida—Kaliana, compared with the French arc, gives  $\frac{1}{314}$ ; with the Russian arc,  $\frac{1}{309}$ ; with the English arc,  $\frac{1}{317}$ ; and with the Swedish arc,  $\frac{1}{313}$ . These instances show by their discrepancy how unsatisfactory the results must be when deduced from any combination of arcs by single pairs. In this case, as in computing the triangles, all the existing data must be taken together, and the most advantageous result deduced from the combination of the whole by the method of least squares. No conclusion deduced from an arbitrary combination of data can be entitled to any authority, or, at least, to any preference, excepting as it is found to agree with the most probable result deduced by the process now referred to. We may remark also, in respect of the French arc, that Colonel Everest assumes the length of the section from Formentera to Montjoux, as given in the '*Recueil d'Observations Géodésiques*,'

and consequently appears not to have been aware of the very considerable error of 67·84 toises, or 407 French feet, which was detected by Puissant in the original computation of the distance between the parallels of those two places.

The arcs of meridian which have been measured in different countries now extend over so many degrees of latitude that no important correction need be expected to be made in the elements of the terrestrial spheroid from their further extension, at least in the northern hemisphere. In fact, with the exception of about 9 degrees between the parallels of Kaliana and Formentera, and a smaller interval of about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  degrees between the northern extremity of the Russian arc and the southern extremity of the Swedish, the whole distance has been measured, on different meridians, between the parallels of Punnæ (lat.  $8^{\circ} 9' 35''$ ) and Pahtavera (lat.  $67^{\circ} 8' 40''$ ); that is, nearly two-thirds of the distance from the equator to the pole. In the southern hemisphere we have still only the short arc measured by Lacaille at the Cape, about 100 years ago, but a trigonometrical operation has been in progress in that colony for some years, under the direction of Mr. Maclear, her Majesty's astronomer there, for the purpose of verifying and extending Lacaille's measurement; and from a statement lately published in a German periodical, it appears that about four degrees of the meridian have been measured, and that the anomalous result obtained by Lacaille is to be ascribed to the influence of local attraction at the places he selected for the terminal stations of his arc. When the celestial observations for determining the amplitude are made at stations beyond the reach of local disturbance, the meridional degree is found to be sensibly the same at the Cape as in the northern hemisphere, under the corresponding latitude. We trust the details and results of this interesting operation will soon be made public.

The measurement of arcs of parallel is not less important, in respect of theory, than that of arcs of meridian; but the data obtained in this manner have not been equally satisfactory, in consequence of the practical difficulty of determining differences of astronomical longitude with the requisite precision. Fire signals have not been found to answer the expectations that were formed of them. Of late years the conveyance of local time by means of chronometers has been practised with better success, and in this manner the longitudes from Greenwich of some of the principal European observatories have been ascertained. By the same means, the longitude of Valentia, on the west coast of Ireland, has recently been determined with extraordinary care, under the direction of the Astronomer Royal;

and as the terrestrial distance is accurately known through the trigonometrical survey, a valuable datum is thus obtained for deducing the curvature of the earth. But a still more promising means of effecting the object appears now to be opened up in the use of the electric telegraph, through which differences of longitude may be found with exactly the same precision as the local times can be determined; and when the principal places of Europe, already connected by trigonometrical measurement, shall have been brought into connexion by galvanic wires, as they no doubt will be, the astronomer may hope to obtain ample data, not only for correcting the spheroidal elements of the earth, but even for ascertaining the irregularities of curvature, and the variations of density in the superficial strata.

Colonel Everest regards the prolongation of the Indian arc still farther to the north as a probable event, and he recommends that an attempt should at least be made to connect, by an approximate triangulation, his own stations with those of the Russian survey; for, even if no great accuracy were attained, the operation would add much to the scanty knowledge we at present possess of a highly interesting portion of the earth's surface. 'Though there be,' he observes, 'a belt to be passed through several hundred miles in extent, over which the Chinese government have a control, nominal or real, yet, as that belt is bounded by the territory of Russia on the north, and the British possessions on the south, the jealousy to be apprehended from that source would, no doubt, be mainly counteracted by the influence of two such powerful neighbours, could they ever be persuaded to act combinedly.' The accomplishment of this object, which seems to present no very formidable difficulties, would give an unbroken series of triangles, extending from Cape Comorin to the extremity of the Russian dominions in Nova Zembla, to which, no doubt, the survey of that empire will ultimately be carried.

Hitherto we have only spoken of the survey under consideration in reference to geodesy, but an important practical advantage resulting from it is an immense addition to the topography of India. Allusion has been made to a longitudinal series of triangles which was carried from the principal stations near the Seronj base at Kalianpur, across the Peninsula, in an easterly direction, as far as Calcutta. Along this series stations were selected at distances averaging about sixty miles; these were made the origin of other meridional series which were carried northwards as far as circumstances would allow, and at the present time a triangulation is in progress for the purpose of connecting their northern limits. The intervals between the



quadrilaterals thus formed are filled in by the usual processes. A longitudinal series running westwards from the neighbourhood of the Beder base, at Damargida, has also been completed, from different points of which other meridional series will be carried both north and south, at distances of about sixty miles. These operations are now going forward under the superintendence of Captain Waugh, who has succeeded Colonel Everest as Surveyor General of India. 'It will naturally be concluded,' Colonel Everest observes, 'that each portion of the territory will be taken up in the order of its importance as regards the revenue which it yields to the state . . . . but that the whole of India will eventually be covered with triangles may be looked for as a result almost as certain as any future event can be; for it was only after long deliberation that the Court of Directors of the East India Company came to the resolution of making their atlas depend on trigonometrical operations, and the unity of design and firmness of purpose of that body are too well known to need that I should dilate on them.' (Preface, p. 7.)

Some incidental remarks which occur in the introductory part of the work afford a pleasing picture of the prosperity and rapid progressive improvement of the upper provinces of British India under the government of their present rulers. In reference to the Dehra Dun, he says, 'The tract of which I am speaking was, about 1837, apportioned by the Government of India among certain English gentlemen; that part on which my base line and its limits were situated became the property of Captain Kirke, who gave it the name of *Arcadia*, in commemoration of, and compliment to, the *Great Arc* series! My station of Hatipaon, where my office stood, looks down on this lovely valley of Dehra, and it was really a beautiful and interesting sight to watch the cultivation growing up as if by enchantment. When I left Hatipaon on the 1st of October, 1843, the whole was a rich and glowing mass of fields and orchards.' (P. xvii.) And in reference to another district he observes, 'The condition of the country appears to have been greatly improved since the period 1824, of which I speak, which is a never failing result where any tract in India has for a reasonable period been subject to the steady and systematic control of British rule; not that I mean to say that the government of the East India Company is precisely Utopian or unsusceptible of amelioration; but what I do mean to assert is, that in all portions of the tract passed over by the *Great Arc* series, of which it will be conceded that I am authorised to speak with confidence, the contrast exhibited

‘by the present over the former amount of prosperity is most striking where the British power has been paramount, and is more and more marked in proportion to the influence which that power exerts. As an example (he adds in a note), in 1824, all that part of the plain of Seronj in which my base line was measured was a desert; in 1837, when remeasuring the same line, free ground on which my camp could be pitched, was not to be found, and it was utterly impossible to carry on the operation without cutting a broad road for three-fourths of the way through growing corn, for all which the owners had to be remunerated.’ (P. xxxvii.)

The general view which we have attempted to give of the contents of Colonel Everest's work will enable our readers to form a notion of the practical difficulties and scientific importance of the operation which he has so successfully executed. Into the technical details of calculation and experiment—the methods of computing longitudes, latitudes, and azimuths; of dispersing errors of observation, and deducing elements of the terrestrial spheroid—our limits do not permit us to enter; and, to say the truth, we feel little inclination for the task. These, possibly, may be the portions of the work on which the author is disposed to set the highest value; and, assuredly, considering the recondite nature of the subjects, and that the methods referred to are the production of one who, he tells us, has passed his life, from the age of sixteen upward, ‘in garrison, cantonment, and camp,’ it will readily be admitted that they prove him to be a person of no ordinary endowments. But we think the benefit to science in the present case consists more in the acquisition than in the application of the data, and it is to the practical part, therefore, that we are chiefly desirous of inviting attention. The deductions *might* have been made by many others; the difficulties—partly accidental, and partly inseparable from such an undertaking—which were encountered both in the geodetical and astronomical parts of the operation, could only have been surmounted by a combination of scientific knowledge, practical skill, and energy of character, which is rarely met with. Nevertheless, we should fail to do justice to Colonel Everest if we omitted to remark that the analytical investigations into which he has entered at considerable length (though not farther than was necessary for the explanation of his processes of computation, and the correct appreciation of the results) are conducted in a manner which not only evinces a perfect familiarity with the intricate theories of calculation applicable to geodetical measurements, but also mathematical attainments and ingenuity of a very high order. Novelty could scarcely be ex-

pected in the treatment of subjects on which so much labour and skill have been expended, and the talents of so many illustrious mathematicians have been exercised; yet his modes of investigation are sometimes new, and his illustrations frequently original and striking. Sensible, however, of the disadvantages under which he laboured, and the extreme difficulty of the operation he had to perform, he does not venture to hope that he has produced a work free from imperfections, but, 'leaving to gentlemen more learned than himself, the task of pointing out the errors of omission and commission,' with which he is chargeable, he begs them 'to accept his assurance that he has done his best, and would have done better if he could.' Apology was unnecessary. The work is a creditable one in every respect, and, after the *Base Métrique* of the French astronomers, must be regarded as the most important contribution which has been made to geodesy since the beginning of the present century.

ART. IV. — 1. *An Introduction to Shakspeare's Midsummer Night's Dream.* By J. O. HALLIWELL, Esq. London: 1841.

2. *Illustrations of the Fairy Mythology of a Midsummer Night's Dream.* By J. O. HALLIWELL, F.R.S. London: Printed for the Shakspeare Society. 1845.

ON hearing of the quarrel between Bishop Hare and Dr. Bentley, Sir Isaac Newton could not help expressing his astonishment that two such Divines should be fighting one another about a play-book!

Could the great philosopher have looked a little farther into futurity, and surveyed his own university, — the university whose studies were revolutionised by his renown, — he would have found greater food for wonder. He would not only have discovered that a play-book is sufficient grist for the workings of very subtle and ingenious minds, but he would have seen a practical exemplification of that connection between Theology and the Drama which seems to have so sorely puzzled him. For the celebrity of Porson, besides tempting the critical talent of the University of Cambridge to go bodily upon the Grecian stage, did also what in our days must be considered well-nigh a miracle, — it made bishops without question. A Greek play, middlingly edited, has securely seated on the Episcopal Bench, safe from the cross-fire of Mandamus and Præmunire (unless on

the application of old Hermann) more than one of our 'Porsoni sectatores.' Thus both scholastic and professional ambition long found their satisfaction in the study of play-books: and Sir Isaac's university has seen the rise and fall of several reputations, which, standing on no other basis, did nevertheless, for the time, and within the limits of academic ideas and influences, fairly jostle Sir Isaac's own.

It is some comfort, however, to know, that the pride of scholarship, and the glory of settling a disputed reading, have not blinded even Greek professors to the merit of our own dramatic literature. Dobree, the most distinguished of Porson's successors, had the virtue to acknowledge (we presume in private) that, after all, the only plays worth criticising were those of Shakspeare. It was probably the contemplation of some one of those dramas whose boundless perspectives make all other compositions narrow — of Othello or Hamlet — that wrung from him the confession. And, considering the character and craft of the speaker, it was an admission of some consequence. Now-a-days, indeed, it would be more valuable if, it brought with it an answer to the further question — of these plays who is worthy to be a critic?

Our own attention has been lately drawn to a play, which we are hardly accustomed to rank among the miracles of genius just alluded to. But there is surely something not a little singular in the influence exercised by the '*Midsummer Night's Dream*.' Its external effects, so to speak, are quite out of proportion to the merits, or to what are commonly considered the merits, of its internal structure. No other production of the Master is apparently so fitted to excite the sympathetic chords which unite poetry with its sister arts. The genius of Mendelssohn was first evoked by it. The compositions with which it inspired him, wonderful as they are in their own harmony, are not less so in their correspondence with their original. The spirit of the '*Midsummer Night's Dream*' breathes through them. The late Exposition at Westminster Hall charmed us with another instance of its fruitful and suggestive power. Nobody who saw there Mr. Paton's picture of the '*Reconciliation of Oberon and Titania*,' can have forgotten it. It will abide by them as a fairy frontispiece to an ideal edition of the '*Midsummer Night's Dream*,' — more properly so, perhaps, than Sir Joshua's Puck, inasmuch as its canvass introduces us more fully into the nature of the subject, and its vast and bewildering variety. \*

We do not hesitate to avow our fears that the fairy race have of late been in danger of losing caste, and falling from the high estate which Shakspeare had assigned them. One con-

ception, rather oriental and very French, has been gradually changing them into the Ladies Bountiful of interesting princes and embarrassed princesses,—into the supernatural machinery of a much materialised literature. Another would seem to be silently metamorphosing them into the nondescript personages, spoken of in various ways in drawing-room ballads. It is fortunate, therefore, that a painter of the genius of Mr. Paton\* should step in to take us back to higher points of view, and seek to re-establish their ancient lineage and ancient faith. The subjects of Oberon, in his hands, retain no mark of a connection either with the drawing-room fairy or with the creatures of Madame d'Anois and the Cabinet des Fées—with nonsense or stage tinsel. The artist has painted them as belonging entirely neither to the domain of fancy nor to that of reality. We have them half human, half superhuman, bearing with them the indications of their heterogeneous origin, Greek, Romantic, and Teutonic—just such as the veritable 'good people' (to use the timid old euphemism) might be, hanging loosely on the confines of existence, annually recruited from mankind, and annually tythed by Satan.

Moreover, as reviewers, we owe a debt to Mr. Paton. His picture has served us as a *point d'appui* for sundry vagrant speculations in which we had been indulging respecting the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. He seems to have experienced precisely the same difficulty which is felt by every intelligent reader of that wonderful play—a doubt regarding the exact position of the 'elf-king and his jolie compagnie' in relation to the other characters who move in turn over the stage,—the stately figure of the great Athenian legislator, the mythic Amaranth, the lovers, the inimitable troupe of artizans, nay, even Pyramus, Thisbe, Wall, and Moonshine. We say nothing of the various stature of his fairy groups. We think it quite allowable that some should be small enough to

'The honey-bags steal from the humble bees,  
And, for night tapers, crop their waxen thighs,  
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes :'

others large enough to be maids of honour to that queen whom her lord accused of flirting with man born of woman, and whose appearance and advances did somehow or other *not* astonish

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\* We have been informed, and it is for many reasons worthy of note, that this most promising young artist began life as a designer for the Paisley weavers.

honest Bottom. But the human passion—the mockery of human passion, if you will—in their countenances, does certainly bewilder the spectator; it constitutes a standard of comparison, to which we involuntarily refer the mortal and supernatural personages; and the effect is, that the sleeping weaver looks like an overtaken Cyclops, and Helena like a giantess of the old world, one who ‘could with a finger stay Ixion’s wheel.’ Nor does the scenery strike us as equally suited to both—it is either on too large a scale for one group, or too small for the other, since trees and sticks, pools and puddles, have not the same proportions. There is certainly a difficulty somewhere.

Taking a regretful leave of Mr. Paton, in the hope, however, that we soon again may meet, we propose to devote a few pages to the drama itself. To analyse thoroughly its structure—to determine its purpose—to settle the due position and mutual analogies of its elementary groups—these four distinct and incongruous aggregates of figures which, drawn from the four quarters of the circle of imagination, seem to mingle indifferently together in its action, while they forward it till its close—each of these would be a worthy achievement for the shaping fantasies (as Theseus calls them) of Shakspearian critics. Unfortunately, this is a field in which the labour of past critics has been but ill rewarded: and there is but little likelihood of their successors faring better, in a case where one’s neighbour, if he has not a theory of his own, (not that that usually makes much difference,) is exceedingly apt to think that we are apprehending, in our refinements, ‘more than lost reason ever comprehends.’

We shall be contented, therefore, if we succeed in delivering ourselves intelligibly of our opinion, and more than contented if we sharpen the curiosity of our readers. Not that we have any apology to make for the line which our speculation has taken. For, excluding all affectation of mysticism, we are convinced that there is always a great advantage in attempting to trace the thread of purpose which runs through every play of Shakspeare. As in waters which swarm with life and riches, something, well worth letting down the net for, will be drawn up at every cast, even if it be not exactly that which we are seeking: some admirable unison of thought will be manifested—some latent beauty of connection made plain—some supposed discrepancy demonstrated to belong to the higher harmonies. In this point of view, the *Midsummer Night’s Dream* is peculiarly tempting to critical ingenuity: since, it is a play from whose perusal it is hardly possible to rise without an undefinable impression, that there is some law of regularity holding together and reconciling its seeming confusion. In advancing our reading,

of the riddle, we must premise that we do not intend to meddle with a question which often in practice, though certainly not of necessity, is found to intrude itself into investigations of this nature. We mean, whether it is necessary to suppose the continued presence of conscious design in the mind of a poet while engaged in elaborating the proportions of a symmetrical whole. In our opinion, nothing is more idle than reasoning on a subject where, from its very nature, we can never acquire the knowledge which is necessary for deciding on it. And nothing surely can be plainer, than that we cannot limit the extent of artistic excellence attainable by man. In happy natures, time and practice do notoriously generate a faculty of production no less freely and instantaneously at the bidding of the will than our command over the particular uses of the limbs. In such cases we cannot distinguish between conscious and unconscious exertion — they blend together; just as the ready writer knows not whether his mind follows his pen. So with the caracoles of the finished equestrian — so with the ‘round O of Giotto!’ Very bold will he be, who shall pronounce whether, or in what degree, the mind of the great master of words and thoughts paused consciously over this or that beauty of detail, albeit separable and appreciable by those who calmly look on the work afterwards from their own point of view. It is enough for us, that these graces are really there — a truth which we are happily safe in assuming in the present age. For the search after them and after their relations to each other, we do not think we are disqualifying ourselves by declining to discuss the greater or less self-consciousness of their author.

The immense advance made of late by Shakspearian criticism has been already noticed in this journal. (Ed. Rev. No. cxliii.) But it seems to us, that this very fact has caused some injustice to be done to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Signal success in proving unity of action in most of the plays of Shakspeare has naturally produced a belief in its existence in all. In consequence, modern writers on æsthetics have come to the study of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* with this conviction on their minds, and have assumed the existence of a unity without examining sufficiently into its character. The play consists, as we have said, of several groups, which at first sight appear to belong not so much to the same landscape as to different compartments of the same canvass. Between them, however, a coherence and connection are soon discovered, of which we have rather hints and glimpses and a general impression than full assurance. We do not say that this connection is not cheerfully admitted on all hands; but it is noticed as a kind of

paradox, as though it were not the result of obedience to any discernible law. And we are bid to wonder at it, as one of the greatest miracles of Shakspeare's genius, that he has succeeded in uniting several distinct incoherent and equivalent actions into one consistent whole,—and has produced a perspective without subduing any one part of the picture. Indeed, Mr. Charles Knight, the larger part of whose criticisms on this drama we gladly accept, concludes his remarks by deprecating in a not very encouraging way all endeavours to tamper with the secret.

‘With scarcely an exception,’ he says, ‘the proper understanding of the other plays of Shakspeare may be assisted by connecting the apparently separate parts of the action, and by developing and reconciling what seems obscure and anomalous in the features of the characters. But to follow out the caprices and illusions of the loves of Demetrius and Lysander — of Helena and Hermia — to reduce to prosaic description the consequences of the jealousies of Oberon and Titania — to trace the fairy Queen under the most fantastic of deceptions \* \* \* ; and, finally, to go along with the scene till the illusions disappear; \* \* \* such an attempt would be worse than unreverential criticism. No! — the *Midsummer Night's Dream* must be left to its own influences.’

Is this so? Is the *Midsummer Night's Dream* a *scherzo* and not an *aria*? Surely a definite melody — sometimes, it may be, lost in a variation, or disguised by a florid accompaniment — falls nevertheless most unmistakably on the ear.

Before advancing any observations of our own, we will cite a few passages from professed critics — the fewer, that the import of critical judgments on this play is generally the same. The only writer whose opinion substantially differs from Mr. Knight's, quoted above, is Ulrici; and his conclusions we venture to pronounce the most unsatisfactory of all. He considers the *Midsummer Night's Dream* to be a *parody* on real life; thus certainly giving a purpose to its wild sportiveness, but one which seems unspeakably at variance with the plainest indications. We cannot pause to enumerate all our objections to this solution, if interpreted in anything like its literal sense. The ingenious German appears to have resorted to it in despair; of superficiality or inattention he cannot certainly be accused.

Mr. Hallam's criticism is as follows:—

‘The “*Midsummer Night's Dream*” evidently belongs to the earlier period of Shakspeare's genius: poetical we account it, more than dramatic: yet rather so, because the indescribable profusion of imaginative poetry overpowers our



“senses till we can hardly observe anything else, than from any deficiency of dramatic excellence. For in reality the structure of the fable, consisting as it does of three, if not four, actions, very distinct in their subjects and personages, yet wrought into each other without effort or confusion, displays the skill, or rather instinctive felicity, of Shakspeare, as much as in any play he has written. No preceding dramatist had attempted to fabricate a complex plot: for low comic scenes, interspersed with a serious action upon which they have no influence, do not merit notice. The “*Menæchmi* of Plautus” had been imitated by others as well as by Shakspeare; but we here speak of original invention.”

Schlegel has said of this play, that ‘this most extraordinary combination of the most dissimilar ingredients seems to have arisen, without effort, by some ingenious and lucky accident; and the colours are of such clear transparency, that we think the whole of the variegated fabric may be blown away with a breath;’ and a former Edinburgh reviewer (we here beg to resume our personality) pronounces much to the same effect: that ‘*The Midsummer Night's Dream* is what its title indicates — a dream over which broods the magical dimness of a summer night, half hiding and half revealing scenes where nature slumbers in her most luxuriant beauty. But it is also the dream of a poet — such a dream as no poet save one ever dreamt. Every thing is visionary, every thing unreal, but unreal and visionary as the shapes are which Sleep brings on its wings from the world of Thought; and visionary and unreal in the sense and manner in which those images are so, which would visit thus the fancy of one, whose waking meditations were equally at home in the turmoil of crowded life and by the solitary edge of the haunted stream. The characters who step forward, the feelings they evince, the acts they do, all partake of the same ærial nature. Four groups of figures, in themselves incongruous, and scarcely by any invention capable of being united in actual life, mingle in the tumult of this witching night of Saint John; and as we gaze on them through the shadowy moonlight, they become harmonized to the mind's eye as completely as the wildest apparitions are harmonized in the fancy of the sleeper. \* \* \* And where did such groups ever appear in successful dramatic combination, except in this one work, the most purely poetical of all his author's compositions, and also one of the most highly finished?’

It is manifest that the last two criticisms might be summed up in the single sentence of Coleridge, ‘I am convinced that

'Shakspeare did actually dream this drama on a Midsummer night.'

Some ambiguity attaches to the distribution into *four* groups and *four* actions. With most critics, the fourth action is that of the pairs of Athenian lovers; Hermia and Lysander, Helena and Demetrius, being considered as forming a group distinct from Theseus and Hippolyta. We remember, however, to have seen a clever, but rather wrong-headed, German treatise on the *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Tempest*, the writer of which, placing the lovers in one group with Theseus and his bride, argued ingeniously for a new fourth action—of the Actors,—that is to say, of Bottom and his fellows, not in their pristine character of fantastical clowns, but of performers in the interlude of *Pyramus and Thisbe*. In point of fact, his criticism, like most of those we have seen, proceeded on the principle of separate grouping. Now on reading the play, we cannot escape the impression that this interlude has no meaning or analogy, if it be not designed to unite two of the groups, the Heroes (*i. e.* Theseus and the Lovers) and the Artizans. Our critic plainly saw that the union of two actions was inconsistent with the perfect independence of all, and accordingly the interlude was transformed into a distinct fourth action, in which the Artizans totally change their analogy to the whole play. We have no recollection of support given to this arrangement in any other quarter: for ourselves, we cannot think that it removes the suspicion of some designed relation and interdependence subsisting between *all* the constituent aggregates. Nor does there seem good reason for the disjunction of the Lovers from Theseus and Hippolyta: even if we adopt such a distribution, we shall never be able to establish a difference between them, at all commensurate with the broad boundary which divides either of them from the 'rude Mechanicals' and the lieges of Oberon: so that practically we shall come to the old division of the characters into three parties, the Heroes (the Lovers being included), the Fairies, and the Artizans. But of these three equivalent, incoherent elements, which is the principal? Whose action is the main action? We look for a key to the composition; on which set of figures are we to fix the eye? It is worthy of remark, that ever since Shakspeare's own day some difficulty seems to have been felt, perhaps unconsciously, as to the dominant action of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The several editors, whose names stand in long array on the back of the *Variorum*, censure the poet, more or less, for not giving due prominence to his heroes and heroines, Demetrius and Lysander, Helena and Hermia;

and, in later times, one gentleman solemnly rebukes him for clogging the machinery of his drama by the unnatural and irrelevant creation of fairies. Soon after Shakspeare's death, we have accounts of the performance of a piece called 'The Merry Conceited Humours of Bottom the Weaver,' which we might possibly suspect to have been a selection from our play, were it not for a curious incident in the life of Archbishop Laud. At one period of his internecine war with Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, he discovered that the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' had been performed in the palace of his antagonist. Laud made the most of this scandalous proceeding of the semi-puritan prelate; and he succeeded, as we hear, in getting the representative of Bottom condemned to sit two days in the pillory with the ass's head on his shoulders. This unlucky gentleman is spoken of in terms which show that he was considered the principal performer. We must, therefore, come to the strange conclusion that, at this time, the Artizans were thought to constitute the main action:—a conclusion, by the way, in which many of Liston's admirers, a few years back, undoubtingly concurred.

Let us examine the two groups, first presented to our notice. The first of these consists, according to the arrangement we have adopted, of the Heroes, — Theseus, and his very unhistorical court. These are themselves fanciful and unsubstantial — not, indeed, creatures of the elements, yet still scarcely the men and women of flesh and blood with whom Shakspeare has elsewhere peopled his living stage. We cannot but suspect that there is a meaning in their mythological origin. Shakspeare has neither drawn them from history, his resource when he wished to paint the broader realities of life, nor from the lights and shadows, the gay gallantry and devoted love, of the Italian novel. They are apparently selected purely for their want of association. Their humanity is of the most delicately refined order; their perplexities the turbulence of still life. Moreover, the components of the group, the pairs of Athenian lovers, seem only to be so distributed in order to be confused. There are no distinctive features in their members. Lysander differs in nothing from Demetrius, Helena in nothing but height (iii. 2.) from Hermia. Finally, they speak a great deal of poetry, and poetry more exquisite never dropped from human pen; but it is purely objective, and not in the slightest degree modified by the character of the particular speaker. Turn we now to the second group. If the first were as far as possible removed from every-day experience, these are types of a class ever ready to our hand. They are of the earth, earthy. Bottom

sat at a Stratford loom, Starveling on a Stratford tailoring-board; between them, they perhaps made the doublet which captivated the eyes of Richard Hathaway's daughter, or the hose that were torn in the park of the Lucys. If the former personages were all of one coinage, the characters of the latter are stamped with curious marks of difference. The πολυπραγμοσύνη of Bottom — he would now-a-days be a Chartist celebrity — the discretion of Snug, the fickleness of Starveling, are (as Hazlitt has shown) minutely and fancifully discriminated. And most strongly too is the homely idiomatic prose of their dialogue contrasted with the blinding brilliancy of those rhymed verses which speak the eternal language of love by the mouths of the Athenian ladies and their lovers. In short, they are the very counterpart of the former group; and it is this that we wish to establish, an intentional antagonism between the two. They seem to us, in their respective delicacy and coarseness, to mark the two extreme phases of life, the highest and the lowest, as presented to the imaginative faculty; the lowest, as it may be seen by experience — the highest, as it may be conceived of in dreams.

We must ask our readers to notice particularly that the first act is nearly equally divided between these two actions; one occupying the first half, the other the second. The two parties, without in the smallest degree intermingling, arrange themselves so as to admit of certain complications, the dominant feeling in the one case being refined sentiment, in the other a ridiculous ambition.

In Act ii. we are presented for the first time with a new creation, that of the Fairies. Henceforward, the first two actions, so remarkably separated in Act i., are gradually interwoven with the third, though nowhere with each other. In the beings of whom this third group is composed, nothing is so characteristic as the humanity of their motives and passions — humanity modified by the peculiarities of the fairy race — such as might be expected in a duodecimo edition of mankind. We find working in them splenetic jealousy, love, hatred, revenge, all the passions of men — the littlenesses of soul brought out by each, being, as we think, designedly exaggerated. Their movements too are eminently significant of a vigorous dramatic action, the story being almost epical in form, — the tale of the *μῆνις Ὀβερῶνος*; of which, as it gradually and uniformly advances, we are enabled to trace in the play the origin, development, and consequences. The hypothesis, then, which we wish to put forward is, that the *fairies* are the primary conception of the piece, and their action the main action; that Shakspeare wished to represent this

fanciful creation in contact with two strongly marked extremes of human nature; the instruments by which they influence them being, aptly enough, in one case the ass's head, in the other the 'little western flower.'

It is necessary to this idea, that the two actions of the Heroes and Artizans should be considered completely subordinate, and their separate relations among themselves as not having been created relatively to the whole piece, but principally to the intended action of the Fairies upon them. We shall then have the singular arrangement of the first act purposely designed to exhibit successively the characteristics of the two groups in marked opposition, before exposing them to the influence of the Fairies. Finally, the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe is the ingenious machinery by which, after the stage has ceased to be occupied by the fairy action, these two otherwise independent groups are wrought together and amalgamated.

Some difficulty may yet present itself as to the form of the piece, furnished as it were with a preface and supplement; but we think this can be satisfactorily accounted for. We are not aware, whether the *time* employed in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* has been generally noticed. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* is a dream on the night of Midsummer Day: a night sanctified to the operations of the fairies, as Hallowe'en was to those of the witches. The play is distributed into three distinguishable portions, those included in Act i. — in Acts ii. iii. and the first scene of Act iv. — and in the last scene of Act iv. together with Act v. The second, and far the most important division, comprehends all the transactions of the *Midsummer Night*; its action is carefully restricted to the duration of these twelve witching hours (Oberon having, as he says, to perform all before 'the first cock crow'), while those of the first and third portions take place at distances of two days and one day respectively. Here then we have a stringent reason for Shakespeare's arrangement. He could not introduce us to the two subordinate groups, show us their intended relations, and in the end interweave them by a consistent process, without separating them, when operating *per se*, from the main action. He could, for instance, neither account for the appearance of the lovers in the wood without a previous exposition of their difficulties, and of the agreement to fly on 'morrow deep midnight,' nor for that of the stage-struck artizans, without some intimation of the intention to act a play, which made a rehearsal necessary. He could not follow his usual practice of developing together the relations and position of all his characters, because the limitation to twelve hours would not admit it — and out of these twelve hours

he could not remove the fairy action. So that the first and last sections of the drama, in which the main action does not proceed and only the subordinate groups appear, have nothing to do with the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, but are merely exegetical of it.

There are some minor indications of the truth of our theory. The very title, for instance, solely applicable as it is to that part of the drama in which the fairies appear, seems not a little significant. Also, when the stage is cleared at the close, and the fairies return to bless the bridal bed of Theseus, — a practice of theirs quite distinct from their pranks on Midsummer Night, — the words of Puck in the epilogue are, 'If *we shadows* have 'offended,' &c. Nor is the distribution of the blank and rhymed verse unobservable. Mr. Hallam has said that this play is poetical rather than dramatic. We ourselves have occasionally fancied that, where the objectively poetical element prevails, the dialogue is mostly written in rhyme: where the dramatic, in the ordinary blank verse of Shakspeare. Both Heroes and Fairies speak in blank and rhymed verse, but not indifferently. The relations of the subordinate group are generally, though not invariably, conveyed through the imaginative rhymed lines, while the Fairies — the *dramatic* personages — rarely quit the vigorous versification we are so well accustomed to.

We are desirous that the Fairies should assume in this play a position commensurate with the influence they must always exercise over English literature. Great as is the direct importance of combined purity and beauty in a national mythology, the indirect value is even greater. We have escaped much, as well as gained much, if our imagination has conversed with a more delicate creation than the sensuous divinities of Greece, or the vulgar spectres of the Walpurgis-Nacht. But whether the *entente cordiale* between England and Fairyland be for good or for evil, we must at any rate acknowledge that the connection virtually began on that very Midsummer Night which witnessed the quarrel between Oberon and Titania — a quarrel fruitful in perplexities to other people beside Bottom and the Athenian Lovers.

ART. V.—1. *Établissement des Sœurs de Charité Protestantes en France.* Paris; Delaÿ, 1841.

*Institution des Diaconesses des Eglises Evangéliques de France; États de Situation, 1842 to 1847.* Paris.

*An Appeal on behalf of the Institution of the Deaconesses, established in Paris.* By the REV. A. VERMEIL. London; 1846.

2. *Établissement des Diaconesses de Strasbourg; Rapports Annuels, 1844–5.* Strasbourg.

3. *Établissement des Diaconesses d'Echallens; Rapports, 1843 to 1845, Echallens (Pays de Vaud).*

4. *Neunter Jahresbericht über die Diakonissen-Austalt zu Kaiserswerth am Rhein.* Kaiserswerth, 1846.

5. *Report of the German Hospital, Dalston.* London, 1846.

AT the eastern extremity of Paris, close to the Barrière de Charenton, which leads to the French 'Bethlehem,'—on the outskirts of the Faubourg St. Antoine, one of the great workshops of Parisian industry,—in a quarter which, though poorly peopled, is elevated, wide, and airy, and in one of the widest and airiest streets of that quarter, the Rue de Reuilly, —is situated a remarkable institution. It is one which has attracted no small share of attention among the more earnest and philanthropic portion of French society, together with not a little envy and calumny, and which, as a necessary consequence, has awakened enthusiastic sympathy and support:—it is called the Institute of Deaconesses, or Protestant Sisters of Charity. 'The Institute of Deaconesses' (says the 1st Article of its Statutes) 'is a free association, having for its object the instructing and directing, in the practice of active charity, such Protestant women as shall devote themselves within its bosom to the relief of bodily and spiritual misery, and particularly to the care of the sick, the young, and the poor.'

Its existence dates from the year 1841. It owes its foundation to one of the most distinguished ministers of the Reformed (Calvinistic) French Church,—a child of the quick-minded, warm-hearted south,—the Rev. Antoine Vermeil: who, after fulfilling for many years the arduous and conspicuous functions of the Protestant ministry at Bordeaux, accepted, some years back, a still more arduous and conspicuous post at Paris. Here it was, that he was enabled to realise a long-cherished idea, and to do so in conjunction with a worthy mi-

nister of the Lutheran Church (one borrowed indeed, as it were, by her from her Calvinist sister), the Rev. M. Valleté. The institution has since grown up, under the joint and harmonious patronage of the two established Protestant churches of France (represented in its Council, the one by a President, M. Verneil; the other by a Vice-president, M. Valleté); swelling from a mere house to a vast establishment, and from a Refuge for Female Penitents to a complete Normal School of Female Charity, which embraces at once the three great works of Education, Physical Relief, and Moral Reformation.

It was in the year 1844 that the Institute assumed its present development. Already was its original home — a house in the neighbouring 'Rue des Trois Sabres' — too small for its inmates, and its Council had been for two years on the lookout for larger premises, when those which it now occupies fell vacant. They had previously been used as a school for 200 children; the grounds covered a space of two French acres, and were surrounded by high walls. But how was it possible to acquire such a property, for which 100,000 fr. (4000*l.*) were asked, with a yearly income not yet reaching the quarter of that sum? A lease for a long term of years, with a right of purchase at a fixed price, was, however, proposed, and had been nearly accepted by the owner, when suddenly the news came that a Roman Catholic community, somewhat analogous in purpose, had agreed to the original terms, and that the purchase was to be concluded the very next day! . . . of those happy temerities which are justified to vulgar eyes by the success which sometimes befalls them, to reflecting minds by the earnest faith which can alone inspire them, the President of the poor and struggling Protestant Institute hastened the very next morning to the proprietor, won back the lately rejected bargain, and found himself the owner of a huge property, with a personal debt of 110,000 fr.—of which 40,000 were to be paid down immediately — and with scarcely a few hundred francs of ready money! In two days 75,000 fr. had been lent by a few Protestant friends (including the honoured names of the Andrés, the Delesserts, the Eynards, the Hottingers, the Mallets); other sums have since been lent from time to time; while the yearly income of the Institute has risen from about 21,000 fr. in 1842-6 to upwards of 80,000 fr. in 1846-7! Never did seeming madness prove greater wisdom.

The present buildings, we have said, are extensive; a good frontage on the street, two long wings, and a very large garden behind. To the façade and wings correspond respectively, more or less exactly, the three great divisions of the Institute — the



Hospital, the School, and the Penitentiary. To the left stands the School, which, together with the 'Crèche,' its adjunct, provides for the early care and education of infants of both sexes, and for the complete education and training of girls until the age of eighteen. The Crèche is small; the Infant School, on the other hand, numbers 200 children of both sexes on its lists, of whom from 90 to 120 are daily present; singularly plain-looking generally to an English eye, but for the most part fat and happy. Next comes the Upper School, for girls only, on the monitorial system, comprising about 90 pupils, of whom about 60 are day scholars, and the remaining 30 belong to the different branches of the establishment. Here education is carried on, as far as is practicable; and not only the general principles of religion, but its distinctive dogmas, begin to be taught. Nevertheless, many Roman Catholic mothers have been so struck with the advantages which their children have derived from the Infant School, that they have solicited their admission to the Upper School; which implies as many conversions from Romanism, not made by any proselytising spirit, but through the mere influence of a good and holy example. No child, it may be added, is admitted to either of these Schools, the Infant or the Upper, without the written consent of its parents; if Roman Catholics, testifying that they are aware of the Protestant character of the Institute. And yet, of the infant pupils, upwards of three-fourths belong to Roman Catholic families.

Beyond the Upper School is the 'Atelier d'Apprentissage' or Training Establishment, for girls only, who are trained up in it, from the age of thirteen to that of eighteen, either as servants or as workwomen; their intellectual and religious education keeping pace with their apprenticeship to labour. Speaking of female apprentices under ordinary circumstances, M. Vermeil observes, that 'one of the greatest moral dangers for young workwomen in Paris, is to be found in apprenticeship establishments, where so many evil examples attend them, so many temptations, so many pernicious influences; and this particularly at the period when religious education is usually imparted.' The same evils are deeply felt in London.

A link between the School and the Hospital is afforded by the Infirmary for scrofulous children. The effects produced in this department by pure air, wholesome and abundant food, and kind attention, are perfectly marvellous.

Next comes a small Hospital, occupying the street-frontage. It contains separate wards for men, women, and children, — 115 patients were admitted to it in 1846-7, besides the dis-

persing of gratuitous advice to out-door patients, and the vaccination of children, all, of course, by competent medical officers. So long as Protestant Sisters are excluded from hospitals which Protestant money contributes to support, so long will this branch of the establishment (which is not, however, proposed to be much extended) be absolutely necessary for the training of the Deaconesses, as hospital and family nurses, to those duties, by which the Roman Catholic '*Sœurs de Charité*' have been rendered famous. The Hospital is not entirely gratuitous: but the poor are admitted at reduced prices, descending as low as 1fr. a day, or a third of the average cost of each patient. An ingenious system has, however, been established, that of the patronage of beds; by which fifteen or twenty subscribers agree to contribute, if called upon, 2 fr. each a month; this, with the slight acknowledgment almost invariably made by the patient himself or by his special protector, is sufficient to make up the total expenditure.

Passing through a pleasant little chapel, where divine service is performed every Sunday and a Sunday School is held, you enter the Penitentiary, if we may so call it, which is divided into three entirely distinct parts,—the Refuge, the Retreat\* (*Rétention*), and the School of Discipline (*Disciplinaire*). The former, containing twenty-five cells, is destined to penitent females of the Protestant persuasion on their dismissal from prison, or who, desirous of themselves to abandon the path of prostitution, are admitted on payment of a yearly sum of 300 fr. (24l.) The last 'Report' contains some interesting details of the general results of this branch of reformation. About one-third of those who have left the establishment have fallen away again into vice; about another third have kept aloof from outward shame; while the remaining third may be confidently considered as reclaimed. However, to give more effect to this part of their experiment, the committee have decided upon admitting penitents, not as heretofore for two years certain, but for an indefinite period. And as they are to be formed not for solitude, but for society, it has been thought proper to employ some of them, when practicable, in the laundry of the establishment; a hazardous, but necessary test of their sincerity.

The second branch is that of the '*Rétention*,' destined originally for girls under age, convicted by a judicial sentence, or (according to a peculiar provision of the French law\*) confined judicially on their parents' demand. But an asylum for the former class of minors having been opened at Ste. Foy (a re-

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\* Code Civil, art. 375—9.

formatory institution for Protestants, on the model of that of Mettray,) it is intended from henceforth to confine the efforts of the Deaconesses to the latter class of girls, who were hitherto sent to the Roman Catholic establishment of St. Michel.

The 'Disciplinaire,' again, is intended to receive 25 girls of from 7 to 15 years of age, of vicious or stubborn dispositions. This is found to be the most toilsome and unattractive department in the Institute. The poor children, who are admitted into it, are mostly narrow-minded as well as evil-hearted; and the Sisters observe that 'the germs of sin are marvellously fostered by a certain want of intellectual development.' There can be no question at any period of life of the truth of the observation, though especially true of youth—'Narrow-mindedness tends to wickedness.'

\* It is the nature of rational and systematic charity, not only to be always making for itself more work, indoors or out, but to form and encourage others to similar exertions. Already other Protestant establishments, charitable or otherwise, are springing up around them: as, a higher Protestant girls' school, a primary school for Protestant boys, a cheap lodging-house for the poor, a home for Protestant servants out of place. All these are unconnected except by sympathy with the Institute; but within its bosom there have already risen up both a class of pupils, who without seeking to become Deaconesses, come to study in the different fields of charitable activity which it opens to them, and also a class of nurses for the sick, of a lower order than the actual Deaconesses.

It is almost incredible;—but the whole of these various functions are performed by a *personnel* of eighteen Sisters, of whom six are only candidates, or 'aspirantes.' And, what with a staff so limited, seems still more wonderful, the Institute has already sent forth Deaconesses from time to time, to superintend charitable institutions in the provinces; for example, to a Hospital at Montpellier. Though of course, with a central development so great, there can be scarcely ever any Sisters to spare to the distant applications which are constantly coming in.

The Sisters belong to all ranks of society; there are farm-servants and teachers, shepherd girls and ladies. They come from various parts of France, though mostly from the south. Provence furnishes the admirable Directing Sister, one of the two master-minds of the establishment. One Sister is an Englishwoman.

\* We have said that the Institution is supported by the two established Protestant churches of France, every minister of which at Paris (one only excepted),—in some instances, after

several years of opposition or estrangement — has at last acknowledged the usefulness of its aim, and the sincere piety of its direction. Beyond the pale of French Protestantism, the clergymen of both the Anglican congregations at Paris, as well as a worthy Wesleyan minister, have expressed themselves, by subscription or otherwise, in its favour.

From the municipal body of Paris it has obtained the highest testimony. In a Report of the Prefect to the Municipal Council, in 1846, he states: 'I have inspected the Establishment of Deaconesses in all its details, and observed everywhere that an intelligent directing spirit had presided over its organisation, — over the separation of its different works, — over the excellent distribution of the various functions. I saw that everything had been ordered after a thoughtful study of those improvements which have been introduced into other establishments, so as to facilitate the *surveillance* of every part of the institution; to spare time and trouble to servants, and to procure all possible economy, although nothing has been omitted for the material comfort of the different persons who have occasion to profit by the advantages of this important asylum. . . . The Institute of Deaconesses is so well ordered as to be worthy of serving as a model to other establishments of a similar nature, which might be founded upon a larger scale.' In concluding his report, the Prefect solicited from the body over which he presided, a first grant of 1000 fr. (40*l*.) Some months afterwards, a committee, named by the Municipal Council, came unexpectedly to visit the Institute, and after a three hours' investigation, in their Report recommended a grant of 1500 fr. With the rarest of liberalities, the Municipal Council outbid its own committee, and by an unanimous vote, doubled the sum which had been before proposed.

The general administration of the Institute is vested in a Directing Council, composed of two ministers of either church, of the Directing Sister, and of from four to six ladies: and it is itself superintended by a '*Comité de surveillance*,' composed of from three to five lay members. Subordinate to this central government, the three great branches of the Institution form, as it were, so many federate states, each directed by a separate committee of ladies.

The Directing Sister constitutes, so to speak, the executive power: to this extent she represents the association, and obedience is due to her from the other Sisters. The Sisters are admitted between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five (subject to extraordinary exceptions), and only with the consent of their families; unless they should be orphans, or widows who have either passed

the *annum luctus*, or are more than thirty years of age; and they must, in all cases, be free from special family duties. On their admission they are first received as Candidates (*aspirantes*), then as Assistants (*adjointes*), the period of probation lasting eighteen months. Every Sister must in turn go through all the various functions of the establishment, from the kitchen upwards; but after her final reception as Deaconess, she devotes herself to the branch, for which she feels the most decided vocation.

During the eighteen months of their noviciate, the Sisters pay a yearly sum of 400 fr., besides bringing with them a '*trousseau*;' but, in exceptional cases, gratuitous or semi-gratuitous admissions may be granted (funds permitting) by the Directing Council. After her admission as Deaconess, every Sister is maintained, in health and in sickness, during her years of service, and afterwards in her old age, by the association, at the cost of about 300 fr. a year. All that she may make in the way of profit by her labour belongs to the association, — whatever fortune she may possess, remains with herself. There are provisions for indemnifying Deaconesses who are dismissed by the Council, or who may withdraw from the association for reasons to be approved of by them (marriage being one of these), after four years' service at the least. All are free to leave at any time, although a moral obligation of service for a definite period, or of otherwise indemnifying the association, is considered to attach to those who have received gratuitous or semi-gratuitous admission.

The total expenditure of the Institution amounts to 87,000 fr., being somewhat more than its receipts; — yet this is a small sum, surely, when we consider the magnitude of the establishment, with its three great divisions, its seven distinct yards or gardens, its 127 rooms, 148 beds, of which upwards of 100 are nightly occupied, and the 300 persons who are daily received beneath its roof for purposes of instruction or relief; besides the occupation of another house, — itself of large dimensions for any ordinary purpose, — the original birth-place of the Institute, and still the private home, as it were, of the Sisters themselves.

We have been thus particular in describing the nature and arrangements of the Paris Institute of Deaconesses, in consequence of its offering the most accessible example, and being, at the same time, the most complete and systematically organised institution of the kind, anywhere to be seen. We will suppose that we are now asked — why pursue so many objects at once? why join in one so many different branches of charity? — there surely must be confusion, conflict of wants and interests, charit-

able bickerings and jealousies. In answer to this apprehension, we might submit that, in point of fact, it is sufficient to reply that nothing of the sort has as yet appeared, after six years' trial, every year almost bringing with it a new foundation. But the very raising of the objection implies a misconception of the purposes for which the Institute exists. It is not a Hospital, nor a School, nor a Penitentiary; it is, we repeat it, a great Normal School of Female Charity. Neither the good education afforded within its bosom to the young, nor the care to the sick, nor the wise discipline to the vicious, can ever constitute its real end, its essential perfection; but the full development and wise training of all the impulses of the female mind, which may best serve to promote and fulfil those several aims. Considered in this light, variety of field is an indispensable condition to its due existence. Some minds recoil from the often loathsome duties of attendance on the sick, yet delight in the teaching of children, other women, again, patient watchers beside a sick bed, are incapable of sympathising with the noisy exuberance of animal spirits in childhood. The duties of superintendence over the penitent female, over the perverted child, are different from either of the former ones, and indeed different in themselves;—whilst the details of household administration frequently belong to another character altogether. Yet, what ought to be the moral of this diversity, supposing the same spirit of faith and love to inspire them all alike, and bind them together by the golden link of heartfelt sisterhood? Surely, that the variety of human character can only be brought to bear its most efficient results, by supplying it with a variety of objects. How far the great axiom of Fourierist socialism, '*Les attractions sont proportionnelles aux destinées,*' can ever be realised on a large scale in society, half a dozen revolutions or more may be required to show. On a small scale, certainly, there is no surer index to success. 'A man's inclination to a calling,' says one of our most effective trainers, addressing a favourite pupil, 'is a great presumption that he is or will be fit for it. . . . My advice to you would be to follow that line for which you seem to have the most evident calling; and surely the sign of God's calling, in such a case, is to be found in our own reasonable inclination, for the tastes and faculties which he gives us, are the marks of our fitness for one thing rather than another.'

As regards the spiritual character of the Institute, the consideration of which would need far more space than we can here afford it, suffice it to say, that it is thoroughly Protestant. No vows, no poverty, no monastic obedience, no celibacy, no engagements— even temporary— no claustral seclusion, no vain prac-

tices, no domination over conscience, no tyranny over the will, such are the 'fundamental principles,' which, with appropriate developments, stand at the head of its Statutes.

The establishment of Deaconesses, founded by M. Vermeil, is not the only one in France. At Strasburg, that old focus of Protestantism, the Rev. M. Hærtter has presided over a similar Institute, since October, 1842. The germ of the Strasburg Institute arose among some young persons who had received their religious instruction from its founder; already in 1837 they had formed themselves into an association — which seems to have been but a stricter kind of Visiting Society, — its members, without in anywise renouncing the ties of family or social life, devoting themselves to the poor. We have not the latest details of this establishment, but we see that in 1845 it already numbered twenty-four Sisters; one Superior Sister, three Conducting Sisters at the head of the different departments, eight Acting Sisters (*sœurs servantes*), two Affiliated Sisters (*sœurs agrégées*), and ten novices. It confines itself, as yet, to the two branches of education and physical relief, and devotes separate premises to each. Its Hospital received in 1844–5 sixty patients, while its Schools—divided into an infant school for either sex; and a lower and superior girls' school,—numbered in these different divisions, 80, 60, and 30 scholars respectively. Besides the Sisters in active employ at Strasburg itself, both within and without the Institute, there were five in charge of the Hospital at Mulhouse (which can accommodate as many as 200 sick), and two at Guebwiller: of these last, one being teacher in a parish girls' school, numbering 40 scholars, the other administrator of a charitable foundation.

The constitution of the Strasburg Institute is somewhat less ecclesiastical than that of Paris: the founder, M. Hærtter, exercising the cure of souls merely, whilst the whole administration is vested in a committee of ladies, aided by a consulting committee of gentlemen. It is not to be considered as having attained its full development, since by art. 2. of its Statutes, it has for its object 'to offer to those Christian women who wish to devote themselves to the Lord's service the means of qualifying themselves, either to become teachers in infant schools and lower girls' schools, or nurses for the sick in hospitals, sanatoria, and private houses, or again to exercise the functions of superintendents in prisons, asylums, houses of refuge, and other charitable establishments where their services may be

Let us now proceed to Switzerland: where there are several Deaconesses' Institutes—for example, one at Echallens, in the

Pays de Vaud, founded by the Rev. M. Germond; another at Boudry, in Neuchâtel, founded by the Rev. M. Bovet, and, we believe, others. We have details only of the first. Its opening followed close upon that of Strasburg: it is the smallest of the establishments which we are now considering; and is confined strictly to the training of nurses for the sick. But we must say, that of the various Reports before us, there are none that breathe a more simple, earnest, unaffected faith, a gentler and a larger-minded charity, than those of M. Germond. The third Report, in particular, contains a pains-taking and interesting account of the Deaconesses of the early church; pointing out, at the same time, the difference between the original institution, as specially annexed to individual congregations, and its revival in the shape of distinct communities at the present day.

The field of labour assigned to the Deaconesses of Echallens, is thus set forth by its founder. First, the care of the sick at their own homes;—the importance of which department is specially felt in times of epidemic. For services of this kind, the demand constantly exceeds the supply; and although the Director of the establishment naturally prefers affording in-door relief, where practicable, out of the six Deaconesses who are usually attached to the parent Institute, one is set apart for out-door nursing. Secondly, the care of the sick in, or at the expense of, private charitable foundations, of which many appear to have been created in Switzerland of late years; five of these, besides one at Lyons for the Protestant sick, employ seven Sisters. ‘May we not hope,’ says M. Germond, ‘that as Christianity shall receive a more practical direction, similar establishments will become multiplied, till there shall be no more single town in our land without its small infirmary, served by a Deaconess, and ready to receive those sick persons who could not without danger be transported to a greater distance?’ Thirdly, the care of the sick in public hospitals employs the remaining Sisters,—making in all fifteen Deaconesses received, besides one who had completed her novitiate, and was already in active service, without having been definitively admitted. Two Deaconesses of Echallens have, since November, 1844, replaced, at the asylum of Abendberg, in Berne, for the care and education of ‘crétin’ children, some Roman Catholic ‘sœurs grises’ from Friburg; of whose services Dr. Guggenbuhl had been obliged to avail himself before, for want of qualified Protestant nurses. ‘If the number of Deaconesses were doubled or even trebled, employment could immediately be found for all.’ (*Second Report, Echallens.*)



Situated in a mixed commune, the Institute of Echallens rents of the Municipality a wing of the former Chateau. The number of sick whom it received in 1844-5, was 159, of whom 134 were admitted gratuitously. Though placed in the midst of an agricultural population, far from any large town, and notwithstanding the vicinity, at no more than three leagues' distance, of a Cantonal Hospital, it is impossible for its Directors to comply with all the demands for admission that are addressed to them. Its receipts, in 1844-5, were under 12,000fr. (480*l.*), its expenditure under 7000 fr.,—the difference being owing to the endeavour to raise funds for purchasing a suitable house.

The Statutes of the Institute are similar to those of Paris and Strasburg. 'The Deaconesses of Echallens are a free corporation, which devotes itself, for the Saviour's love, to the service of the unfortunate, and especially of the sick.' There is, as yet, no internal hierarchy among the Sisters, who are placed under the authority of the worthy minister and his wife, as Directors. A superintending committee has been named to examine the accounts, and to provide for the maintenance of the establishment in the event of the founder's death.

M. Germond's second Report will enable all, who prefer doing it on paper, to pass a day with the Deaconesses at Echallens, without much trouble. They rise at five in summer, six in winter; pray in private; pay their first attentions to the sick; arrange their own rooms; breakfast upon a 'soupe,' or upon coffee and bread; then assemble for family prayer. At seven or eight o'clock the doctor makes his rounds and issues his instructions; he is followed by Madame Germond. Medicines are given, and the Sisters read to such of the sick as wish for it, and finish the house work. Twelve is the dinner hour, the meal being composed of soup, meat, and vegetables, one dish of each. The Sisters are then free to choose their own occupations till two, when they meet to work at their needle. At four there is a 'goûter,'—what with our own working classes would be tea,—here consisting of 'café au lait,' milk, or milk and water. After which, the Director makes his rounds, celebrates divine service for the whole establishment, and pays pastoral visits to those sick who are detained in bed. The Sisters now take a walk for half an hour in summer, this short period of relaxation being transferred in winter to immediately after dinner. At eight o'clock 'soupe' is again served out; at nine to bed? Where watching is required, the Sisters take it by turns; there being a male nurse, or 'infirmier' for male patients. The food is the same for all inmates, unless the doctor should prescribe

otherwise; and patients and nurses meet at the same table. Few of the former remain untouched by the kindness with which they are treated, and, in general, as soon as they begin to recover their strength, they show themselves most anxious to make themselves useful. Letters are frequently received from them after they have left, and some will go leagues out of their way to visit again '*les bonnes sœurs*.' Observe, that these patients form a mixed assemblage of Swiss, French, Sardinians, and Germans; the proportion being about one Roman Catholic to six Protestants.

We now come to the oldest and most considerable of existing Deaconesses' Institutes, that of Kaiserswerth, on the Rhine, founded by the Rev. Th. Fliedner: its ninth yearly Report, that of 1846, is unfortunately the only one now before us. Like the Paris Institute, it commenced by a Refuge for females, comprising, apparently, those only who, on conviction, have undergone judicial sentence, and have been admitted on leaving prison. Although the Refuge is now connected with the general foundation, yet separate accounts are kept of its receipts and expenditure, and separate Reports published. In 1846, it was in the thirteenth year of its existence, and had received during the first twelve years 130 female criminals. Its results are so far satisfactory, that out of that number fifteen had married, two had become teachers, and many more had regained at least outer respectability.

The Institute of Kaiserswerth numbers no less than 101 sisters, of whom sixty-seven are consecrated Deaconesses and thirty-four Candidate Sisters. Their labours are distributed among public institutions, the service of particular communes, the care of the sick in private houses, and the various departments of the main establishment at Kaiserswerth. The first-mentioned class comprises forty-five Sisters, employed in various Hospitals, Lunatic Asylums, Poor-houses, and Orphan houses at Berlin, Marsberg, Kirchheim, Elberfeld, Barmen, Kreuznach, Saarbrück, Worms, Wetzlar, Frankfort-on-the-Mayn, Cologne, and Soest, at the Deaconesses' Institute of Dresden, and at the Pastoral Aid Institute at Duisburg—a very analogous institution for the male sex. The second class, that of Commune-deaconesses (*Gemeinde-diakonissen*) numbered, in 1846, only five sisters, who were employed at Clevcs, Neuwied, and Unterbarmen; but more were shortly to be sent out to Cologne, to Duisburg, &c. From fifteen to twenty Sisters were engaged out of doors as private nurses: while the remainder, or about one-third of the whole number, find ample employment in the Asylum, the Orphan-house and Normal Schools, and in

the other branches of the parent institution, or 'Mother-house' (*Mutterhaus*). A new hospital, on a large scale, has been lately founded at Berlin, to be placed under (we believe) the exclusive care of Deaconesses. The lady who has been designated to take charge of this establishment, herself the bearer of a name and title well known in history, and the early friend of the present Duchess of Orleans, was last year in London and Paris; where she carefully visited the charitable foundations of both cities, spending a day with her foreign sisters at the Paris Institution.

One of the most interesting features of the labours of the German Deaconesses is the recently developed one of parochial service (*gemeindepflege*). It is the exact reproduction of the functions of the early Christian Deaconesses, or Servants of the Church, of whom Phœbe of Cenchrea is, by name at least, the apostolical type. The Parish, or rather Commune, deaconess, has to visit the poor and the sick at their homes, to procure for them, as far as possible, work and clothing, to work for them at her needle, instruct poor children in sewing and knitting, either singly, or in classes where practicable, giving a regular account of her labours to the clergyman, the diaconate, and the Ladies' Charitable Society, where such exists. But, even without being regularly attached to a particular parish or congregation, Deaconesses are able, from their experience in the care of the sick, and in household management, to render the most important public services in times of epidemic. Look, for instance, at the following picture:—

An epidemic nervous fever was raging in two communes of the circle of Duisburg, Gartrop, and Gahlen. Its first and most virulent outbreak took place at Gartrop, a small, poor, secluded village of scarcely 130 souls, without a doctor, without an apothecary in the neighbourhood, while the clergyman was upon the point of leaving for another parish, and his successor had not yet been appointed. Four Deaconesses, including the Superior (*vorsteherinn*), Pastor Fliedner's wife, and a maid, hastened to this scene of wretchedness, and found from twenty to twenty-five fever patients in the most alarming condition,—a mother and four children in one hovel, four other patients in another, and so on,—all lying on foul straw, or on bedclothes that had not been washed for weeks, almost without food, utterly without help. Many had died already; the healthy had fled; the parish doctor lived four German leagues off, and could not come every day. The first care of the Sisters, who would have found no lodging but for the then vacancy of the parsonage, was to introduce cleanliness and ventilation into the narrow cabins of the peasants; they washed and cooked for the sick, they watched

every night by turns at their bedside, and tended them with such success, that only four persons died after their arrival, and the rest were left convalescent after four weeks' stay. The same epidemic having broken out in the neighbouring commune of Gahlen, in two families, of whom eight members lay ill at once, a single Deaconess had the happiness, in three weeks, of leaving every patient restored to health, and of having prevented the further spread of the disease. What would not Dr. Southwood Smith or Mr. Chadwick give, for a few dozen of such hard-working, zealous, intelligent ministers in the field of sanatory reform?

The Hospital at Kaiserswerth is on an extensive scale, and received in 1845-6 568 patients, being an increase of 147 on the preceding year. They were for the most part men, and of all religious persuasions, Protestants, Roman Catholics, — the last are attended by a Roman Catholic chaplain, — and Jews; nearly 200 of these were treated gratuitously. The mortality seems very small as compared with the whole number of patients, — only sixteen. The effects of care and a wholesome diet upon scrofulous children are observed, as in the Paris institution, to be most remarkable, both as to bodily health and moral improvement. The number of children-patients is about 100 a year; a school is open for their instruction, and they resort to it with the greatest delight: those who are able to attend being most zealous to communicate the learning they acquire to as many of their companions as their ailments keep away. In addition to their intellectual training, the children are employed as much as possible in industrial labours. The elder boys are taught to make baskets, lace, nets, rugs, slippers, various articles of pasteboard, &c. Each boy has also, where his health allows of it, some small department of household work to attend to, such as helping to keep the children's wards and school-rooms in order. The very young children make lint, paper cuttings for pillows, &c., while the girls, again, sew and knit. Even older patients are provided as much as possible with employment, the effect of which, we need hardly add, is found most cheering. Nay, moreover, when the renewal of the year draws nigh, 'a great Christmas tree, with bright, glittering wax 'tapers,' lights up the refectory for the sick, who crowd around it, young and old, 'some borne aloft on others' arms, some 'leaning on crutches,' and sing hymns to the child 'Immanuel.'

The Christmas tree seems, indeed, to be almost an article of faith with the good Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth, both within and without the 'Mother-house.' 'It was a subject of peculiar 'joy to us,' says Pastor Fliedner, 'to find that the prevailing

‘ endeavour of the Sisters in most of the Institutions where they  
 ‘ are employed was to confer pleasure on the sick and other  
 ‘ objects of their care, and greater pleasure than they had ever  
 ‘ yet enjoyed. Thus (quite without our suggestion) they have  
 ‘ almost everywhere, of their own impulse, procured Christmas  
 ‘ presents to be given for their charges, even where this had not  
 ‘ been the case formerly ; they have themselves collected in the  
 ‘ town the money, clothes, and other gifts, set up the “ trees of  
 ‘ “ Christ,” gladdened the sick, the poor, and the wretched with  
 ‘ the bright glittering light, such as they had never seen before,  
 ‘ with the pretty songs, with the presents of food, and drink,  
 ‘ and clothes, so that they would often weep tears of joy in  
 ‘ their surprise, and cry, “ No, never, in all our lives, did such  
 ‘ “ a thing happen to us ! Never yet had we such a pleasure !  
 ‘ “ You are making us too happy ! You are doing too much  
 ‘ “ for us ! ” \*’

Exquisitely German this perhaps, and childish. Yet some may be so un-English, as to ask, whether, it might not turn out as well, were the Christmas of an English hospital or English workhouse occasionally to present as gay a scene ?

After the Hospital comes the Normal School for female teachers, of whom upwards of fifty are sent out every year. Different in this from the other Institutions which we have as yet examined, the Institute of Kaiserswerth has scarcely so wide a home field for practical teaching, as might at first sight be expected from its general dimensions. Thus its Infant-school only numbers forty children ; its Hospital-school, we presume, contains but a comparatively small proportion of the hundred juvenile patients, and its Orphan-house, to which we shall presently advert, reckons about twenty inmates. The anomaly is explained, if we do not mistake some passages in the Report, by the circumstance that the Sisters and pupils are admitted to the parochial schools of the town. Their theoretical education appears to take a wider scope than in other kindred establishments — the course of instruction lasting, however, only four months for Infant-school teachers (can this be enough ?), and one year for teachers in Elementary Schools. Most of the pupils also attend the children’s wards in the Hospital for a few weeks, to familiarise themselves with the management of children when sick.

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\* Within the last few months, our London newspapers have duly recorded the Christmas tree of 1847, set up at the German Hospital of Dalston — an offshoot, as will presently be shown, of the Kaiserswerth Institute — in the presence of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge. We were glad to see Sir Robert Inglis and Mr. Bunsen taking an active part in its recent annual meeting.

The demand for teachers from the Institution, as from every other Deaconesses' Institute, much exceeds its capabilities of supply, and it is intended to give a great extension to the Normal Schools; by a sort of joint-stock company, or, rather, joint-stock loan (*actienplan*). May we venture to observe, however, that, in assuming the character of an ordinary normal school, the Institute impairs, to our mind, the completeness of the idea of a female Diaconate, by confining the functions of the latter to the care of the sick and the household management of charitable institutions? In the list of Deaconesses, we do not find one who is devoted to the work of education. It is true that the deficiency, if any such exist, will be partially supplied by the last branch of the Kaiserswerth Institute, that of the Orphan-house. This department is intended for the orphan daughters of clergymen, teachers, and others of the educated classes, and for the daughters of missionaries absent in foreign countries. Their education is to fit them for the middle ranks of life, with a thorough training to all household duties. About twenty children are here brought up, according to their dispositions, either to housekeeping, teaching, the care of the sick, or that of the poor; so that the Orphan-house may be considered as a school for the development of the various modes of female activity, and especially as a seminary for the supply and maintenance of the Deaconesses' Institute itself. We fear, however, that even this will not wholly supply the want of regular Deaconess teachers. Should Deaconess teachers only be admitted from among the pupils of the Orphan-house, too great a sameness would be imparted to its educational system; it would lose the advantage of a constant infusion of new blood, by the introduction from without of grown-up members, earnest and zealous; and might become stereotyped in spirit, like many a Roman Catholic educational convent, which is recruited but from among its own pupils.

The material magnitude of the Kaiserswerth establishment is of course considerable. It has several gardens, an ice-cellar, a bake-house, a laboratory, baths on the Rhine, two large bleaching-grounds, a dairy, with four cows, &c. It has to provide daily food for 300 persons. Its income in 1845-6 was 17,303 ths. (under 2524*l.*), less by upwards of 2000 ths. than its expenditure; with a debt of upwards of 6000 ths. (875*l.*)

Its influence has been most extensive. Not only have similar Institutions, either offsets from it, or framed upon its pattern, sprung up in divers parts of Germany — at Dresden, at Berlin, and elsewhere — but it has sent Deaconesses to German Switzerland, to St. Petersburg, to London; and in the course of next

spring, its Director intends crossing the Atlantic, with several Sisters, to found a new Kaiserswerth among the German colonists of Pennsylvania. Several Sisters are already in London, in charge of the German Hospital at Dalston, which a late unfortunate broil between its physician and council has probably brought more prominently into notice than two previous years of silent usefulness. This Institution, founded in 1845, occupies the former premises of the Infant Orphan Asylum, since removed to Wanstead; it is large and airy, with a very extensive garden, and is situate in the immediate neighbourhood of the class which furnishes it with the greatest number of patients—the sugar-bakers of Bethnal Green. There may be seen, in their especial sphere of activity, the Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth; cleanly, quiet, healthy-looking Germans, going about their work in the most orderly and noiseless manner; never haggling for higher wages, since they have none to receive; trained to obedience, and yet fully conversant with their duties; in fact, at all points, the very antipodes of a Mrs. Gamp, that odious, and we fear often but too true type of the common nurse. The number of Deaconesses in the German Hospital of London was three at first, it is now five; of whom one has been appointed matron, and has the superintendence of the others.

And now comes the question—Is an Institute of Deaconesses required; is it practicable in England, on any truly effective and extensive scale? There will be indifference to overcome in some, the dislike to novelties in others. But we know, that we have the charity: we hope, that we have the religious feeling. We do not fear reason nor inquiry.\* But what we do fear—we confess it—is a cry; a cry, against which neither reason nor charity nor religion are of the slightest service. Protestantism may be in danger! The Papists are coming! Because a certain number of single women have agreed to live in one house, put on one dress, and join their earnings and efforts into one common stock for the relief of certain acknowledged social evils, the whole Apocalypse is likely enough to be ransacked for the millionth time, to prove that the mark of the beast is upon them! Grant, that it were a new thing in Protestantism to form a female community; is that a reason for condemning it? Neither Bible societies, nor Tract societies, nor Missionary societies, can trace their pedigree to the Apostles, nor yet to the early Reformers. And what are they in themselves, but the lower manifestations of that spirit of union, of which religious communities are a higher manifestation; that growing spirit of socialism, (to use a justly suspected word) which may become the most mighty worker of evil, unless we shall succeed in turning it into a mighty instru-

ment of good. If it be lawful for half-a-dozen people to meet together year after year, and week after week, on the committee of a hospital, why should it be unlawful for the same number of persons to spend their lives together as nurses in that hospital, for the same purpose of glory to God and goodwill towards men? Does uniformity of dress offend you? Who does not know that wherever economy is sought after, such uniformity is a necessary means towards realising that end? Is it not still more necessary, where the question is—how to associate ‘in one and the same work, under the same direction, for the same purposes, with the same rights, persons of different classes?’ ‘We have to receive Sisters of all ranks,’ continues M. Verneil (6th Report, p. 18.), ‘from the humble farm servant in *sabots*, to the young lady clad in silk and velvet.’ And least of all surely can such an argument be urged in a country like our own, where uniformity of costume is enforced more than in any other; where the workhouse has its livery like the prison, and the college or school like the footman’s hall; where bishops are perennially cumbered with the apron, and barristers with the wig; where the cleaning of the hideous cauliflower of a marquis’s coachman can be the subject of a judicial action, and charity (whose left hand should not know what her right hand doeth) takes pleasure in dressing out her scholars as merry-andrews throughout every parish in the kingdom.

Objections to apparel can only become serious, when they represent some deeper jealousy. ‘We would not mind,—some people will say, and more will think—we would not mind the community of life, nor the costume, nor the charitable purpose, if Romanism had not given the example of such Sisterhoods. It is an imitation of Romanism.’ Let M. Germond of Echallens answer. ‘An imitation of Roman Catholicism? God forbid! but of a work which should have borne fair fruit in the bosom of Catholicism? why not? where would be the sin? Does not the Holy Scripture command us to “prove all things,” to “hold fast that is good?” You will say, perhaps, that the church of Rome holds no more any thing worth holding fast. Ah! we repel with all our strength those blind prejudices of party spirit, which estrange hearts from one another, chain down all progress; we are persuaded that there is, on the contrary, no section of Christianity which is utterly deprived of God’s graces; we should feel happy to hasten by our example, as we do by our wishes, that blessed time when the various churches, divesting themselves at last of their mutual jealousies, shall come to exchange freely with one another all that each has of really good, and Christian!’



It is incorrect, however, to say that an order of Deaconesses is but a copy of Romanism; it is not so even in outward form. It would be easy to show that in that particular branch which it has shot forth as yet in Germany alone, the Parish-deaconess, it exactly reproduces, as we have already stated, the Deaconess or 'servant of the church,' (*Διακόνισσα, ἡ Διάκονος, diaconissa, diacona*), of the earliest times, an institution which seems to have subsisted in the Eastern Church at least till the eleventh century. Whereas, in its more general form, of an association of females for all purposes of charity, it is not only not Roman Catholic, but historically Protestant in its origin: Since, eighty years before the institution of the 'Filles,' or 'Sœurs de Charité,' by St. Vincent de Paule, a Protestant prince, Henry Robert de la Marck, sovereign prince of Sedan, in 1560, had instituted in his dominions a society of 'Demoiselles de Charité,' for assisting at their own homes the poor, the aged, and infirm, and had supplied it with the needful funds for rendering it permanently efficient. The mission of these new servants of the church was one wholly of free-will; they pronounced no vows, and were chosen from among persons who were free from the marriage-tie, and from the duties which it entails. The only engagement which they took was that of devoting themselves to works of mercy. In our own country, indeed, it may be truly said that the innovation would be little more than what consists in giving greater system and effect to our present principles and imperfect practice: For an Institute of Deaconesses may be represented as the crystallised precipitate of our numberless Ladies' Charitable Societies, among which all its elements float already, only shapeless and dissolved.

But let us not, however, haggle about these miserable questions of outward form or historical precedence. Look to the spirit of the continental Deaconesses. No vows, no poverty, no monastic obedience, says the founder of the Paris Institute. 'We took as the ground of our efforts, not the pretence of salvation by works, but the duty of witnessing by works our love to Him, who came down from heaven to save us.' And such is the testimony of every one of his fellow-labourers. If you want further proofs, look to a melancholy one — the hatred of Romanism for the institution, wherever it has sprung up. What calumnies have not been lavished on the Deaconesses of Paris by the Romanist papers of that capital! Ask M. Germond of Echallens, whose establishment receives so many Roman Catholic patients, how many donations he has received from the Roman Catholics of Switzerland! Ask the founders of the German Hospital in London, how the idea of

introducing Sisters from Kaiserswerth was at first received by the German Roman Catholics of our own metropolis!

To prove their utter want of connection with Romanism and Romanising feelings, the friends of Protestant Deaconesses' Institutes have sometimes assumed too militant a position. For instance, we regret to see that the most complete and original of existing Institutes, and certainly not the least liberal and charitable in its spirit, has paid us the sorry compliment, when addressing the English public, of narrowing its great province to these most unworthy grounds. Its appeal is entitled—'An appeal on behalf of the Institution of the Deaconesses, established in Paris, for the purpose of supporting and extending French Protestantism against the efforts of the Papists.' Alas for and away with this spirit of reaction, however grievously it may have been provoked! Protestantism has other means of conversion,—were it only its yearly millions of Bibles,—than through its present or future Deaconesses; nor have we the slightest wish to see our Protestant Sisters, like their Roman Catholic namesakes, become an engine of religious propagandism, instead of practically setting forth the attractiveness of the faith which is 'shown by works,' and 'worketh by love.' Let them convert by example, that is enough.

God forbid that we should forsake the fundamental principles of Protestantism, the fallibility of human reason, and its inevitable consequence, the right of private judgment, and seek for a moment to deny to others that freedom of action which we claim for ourselves. Convinced as we are that the greatness of England is the greatness of Protestantism, we ask, in good English phrase, only for 'a fair field and no favour.' But so long as through prejudice, through indolence masked in the garb of religious conscrvatism, through cunning indifference joining in chorus with passion and intolerance, we allow Romanism to usurp one Christian virtue, to monopolise one useful institution, to do one good work which we leave unattempted, so long is the field unfair, and the weapons unequal. Rome wields no more powerful weapon than that of her religious Sisterhoods. Can we not—we do not say wrest it from her, but—share it with her? When Lutheran Germany and Calvinist France agree in saying Yes, shall England say No,—or say nothing?

One word more. Years have elapsed since One, whose memory is surrounded at present with more of personal respect and love,—even from those who knew him not, or who read him, while living, backwards,—than perhaps any other contemporary name,—wrote as follows in the introduction to his 'Christian Life, its Cause, its Hindrances, and its Helps:—' 'The true

' church of Christ would offer to every faculty of our nature  
 ' its proper exercise, and would entirely meet all our wants. No  
 ' wise man doubts that the Reformation was imperfect, or that  
 ' in the Romish system there were many good institutions, and  
 ' practices, and feelings, which it would be most desirable to  
 ' restore among ourselves. Daily church services, frequent  
 ' communions, memorials of our Christian calling continually  
 ' presented to our notice in crosses and wayside oratories; com-  
 ' memorations of holy men of all times and countries; the doc-  
 ' trine of the communion of saints practically taught, *religious*  
 ' *orders, especially of women, of different kinds, and under different*  
 ' *rules, delivered only from the snare and sin of perpetual vows;*  
 ' — all these, most of which are of some efficacy for good even  
 ' in a corrupt church, belong no less to the true church, and  
 ' would there be purely beneficial.'

Such were the words of him, who put forth all his strength in warring with Romanising tendencies, and who, in his zeal for realising his idea of the Church of Christ, would have liked nothing better than 'fighting out the Judaisers, as it were in a 'saw-pit!' While we have our doubts whether the greater part of the 'institutions, practices, and feelings,' the revival of which Arnold thought would be 'purely beneficial to the true church,' are applicable to our times, we are satisfied that, in laying before the public a few of the continental instances of religious orders of Protestant women, delivered 'from the snare and sin of perpetual vows,' and in urging their introduction into this country, we are suggesting nothing, which can be misunderstood or misapplied\* — nothing, which is not highly favourable to the cause both of humanity and religion — nothing, which is not appropriate to our present state of society, and of which we are not in urgent, and indeed, disgraceful want.

The sheets of the foregoing article had already passed through the press, when the prospectus was placed in our hands of a 'Training Establishment for Nurses for Hospitals, Families, and the Poor.' It is to be founded on an analogous principle to the Kaiserswerth Institute. Mrs. Fry had attempted something of the sort before. But the establishment now proposed is to be in connection with the Church of England, and is stated

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\* We say in the text, that there is nothing in these Protestant Sisterhoods which can be misunderstood or misapplied. We think it right to mention, however, that we have heard of an establishment, called 'The Home,' in Albany Street, Regent's Park, described to us as being under the care of Drs. Pusey and Dodsworth. If its management should be found to be in contradiction with our assertion, its patrons will have much to answer for.

to have been sanctioned by the Archbishop of York and by several Bishops. It will receive three classes of inmates, — 1st, probationers; 2d, those admitted as nurses after their period of probation, on condition of their remaining five years under the control of the Institution, which clothes and maintains them, and allows them a fixed stipend; after which period, they are to receive a certificate of qualification, and become free to pursue their calling either in connection with the Institution or not. 3dly. Sisters, a class which 'is intended to comprise persons of whatever station in life, who are willing to devote themselves to the work of attending the sick and poor, or of educating others for it under an organised system, like that which will be here provided for them.'

This is very good, by way of a beginning: and, there is a circumstance belonging to it, which must carry weight in this essentially practical country. The proposed institution originates with the medical profession. That such should be its origin, shows at once that it is no product of fantastic enthusiasm. While at the same time it is one more testimony to the great fact, that man's work is found to be best done when the work is looked upon as a religious one, and undertaken with the habits, principles, and feelings which that consciousness involves. The sense or charity of limiting such a society to members of the Church of England, is a very different question. The restriction cannot have come from the medical profession.

ART. VI. — *Seventh and Eighth Reports from the Select Committee on Settlement, and Poor Removal; together with the Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index.* Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be printed, 17th June and 6th July, 1847.

**T**WENTY-SEVEN years have passed since an article on the Law of Settlement appeared in this Journal, written by a contributor, whose hand none can either mistake or imitate. No other writer could expose a mischievous absurdity with the humour and the force of Sydney Smith. We have now to ask what has been since done? Have the absurdities and the evils of the system been remedied? or has any sufficient remedy been agreed upon, and the means for applying it prepared?

In case an entire and effectual reform in the Settlement Laws had taken place, there would be no necessity for now returning to the subject. In the meantime, it is satisfactory to know that the ground has at least been cleared, and an advance made in

the right direction. Not only have positive obstacles been removed, but—what is almost of more consequence—false sentiment and misguided public opinion have shrunk down to something more approaching their proper dimensions.

The proof of this latter fact is to be found in the Report of the committee of last session. With regard to the former, we need only show what the Poor Law Amendment Act has accomplished. That statute made some direct changes in the Law of Settlement and Removal, which were in themselves beneficial: but its indirect results have been of much more consequence. In the article of 1820, to which we have alluded, especial stress was laid on the importance of retaining the power of removal as a test of the labourer's necessity. It operated at that time as a check—indeed, the only check—on the false humanity of justices, who satisfied their own feelings with other people's money. The statute of the 4 & 5 W. 4. c. 76., by establishing Boards of Guardians, abolishing the control of the magistrates, and providing workhouses for able-bodied paupers seeking relief, has made it possible to dispense with indirect checks, like that of removal. To do away with the liability to removal will no longer be equivalent to abolishing the last and only security of society against parochial bankruptcy.\* The system of relief to

\* We have before us a pamphlet published in the year 1819, being a letter to Mr. Sturges Bourne, on his proposal to enact a settlement by residence. It was written by the Rev. Henry Philpotts, Prebendary of Durham; and our readers will excuse us for extracting from it some very sound poor-law doctrine, which, we trust, the present Bishop of Exeter will not disclaim. At p. 23., after most properly denouncing the evils of non-resident relief, he says,—‘Perhaps no legal provision would be more desirable than one which should forbid the giving *permanent* parochial relief to any pauper out of his proper parish, except in such cases as might justify the ‘suspension of a removal warrant.’ This proposition is rather more stringent, but coincides exactly in principle with some of the provisions of the orders of the Poor Law Commissioners, which have been since most furiously attacked. We think the Bishop and the Commissioners are both right. With regard to the hardship inflicted by removal, Mr. Philpotts goes on to say (p. 24, 25.):—

‘On the particular hardship’ (that of removal) ‘which has led me to these remarks, I do not think so seriously as you, and many humane and wise men with you. I do not see why so great a benefit as gratuitous support, at the expense of the public, should be thought hardly earned by compliance with a condition which the good of the public requires. If, even in this age of excessive sensibility, it were attempted to excite our compassion for the unhappy officer or soldier whose subsistence is made to depend on a condition often the most

the able-bodied in aid of wages, has also been practically destroyed. The time, therefore, would appear to be arrived, when the question of settlement may be considered on its own merits.

It will be proper to mention, in the first place, by way of preface, what, with regard to settlement and removal, are the object and provisions of the existing law, under the general Poor Law Amendment Act of 1835, as well as under the temporary Removal Act of 1846.

It seems probable that at one time a settlement of some kind was considered necessary to confer a right to relief: indeed, we have heard it doubted whether such is not now the case. Lord Ellenborough, however, in the case of *Rex v. the Inhabitants of Eastbourne* (4 B. & A. 103.), very unceremoniously overruled a supposed dictum of Lord Holt's, which certainly implied that a person without a settlement might starve. The obligation to afford relief irrespectively of settlement was equally recognised by Mr. Justice Bayley, in 1824. There can, therefore, be little doubt, but that the courts would now enforce the right of a destitute person to relief, whether such person was or was not settled in the parish in which he applied for it. In this case, whatever interest a poor man may have in the questions—whether he has any settlement, and where—it will not be on the ground, that a settlement is a necessary condition to relief. The right to relief is independent of it; the settlement merely represents an ultimate obligation on the part of a particular parish to defray the cost of whatever relief the pauper who is settled in it may require. Accordingly, the right corresponding to this obligation is—not that of the poor man to relief—but that of any other parish, aggrieved by the charge of relieving the pauper in question in the first instance, to transfer the burthen

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painful to his feelings, "who is torn from his family and connexions "to die in a remote garrison," few of us, I conceive, would think the complaint worthy of a serious answer. I am myself hard-hearted enough to feel as little sympathy in the present instance. If, indeed, it can be made to appear that the public good does not require the sacrifice, nothing more can be said: every generous mind must rejoice in relinquishing it. But till that is clearly shown, I venture to hope that the Legislature will not be led by its compassionate feelings to abandon a condition which, defective as its operation is found to be, is yet one of the few remaining checks on the most crying evil of the present system,—the excessive ease with which parochial relief is obtained. Be it remembered that the misjudging tenderness which has sometimes presided at the enactment, as it has too commonly done in the administration of our Poor Laws, has proved in its effects the very reverse of true mercy: "it bleaseth "neither him that gives nor him that takes."

to the parish of the settlement. The process, by which such a transfer is effected, is an order of removal; and under its authority the pauper, and those who constitute his family, are delivered to the overseer of the parish to which the order is addressed. Such an order may be made on a variety of grounds, and these grounds form what are called the 'Heads of Settlement.'

The various heads of settlement are thus given in the evidence of Mr. Lumley, the Assistant Secretary to the Poor Law Commission:—

Head of Settlement.	Origin.	Whether abolished, and if so, when.
Birth - - -	Interpretation of the Courts of Law and ancient statutes	No.
Parentage - -	Interpretation of the Courts of Law as to legitimate children Statute as to illegitimate children	No.
Marriage with reference to the wife	Interpretation of the Courts of Law	No.
Hiring and service -	Interpretation of the Courts of Law and Statutes	Abolished in 1834.
Apprenticeship -	Interpretation of the Courts of Law and Statutes	Abolished, as to sea service, in 1834. Restricted, as to parochial apprentices, in 1844.
Renting a tenement -	Statute - - -	No.
Payment of parochial rates	Statute - - -	Restricted in 1795. Not abolished.
Serving a parochial office	Statute - - -	Abolished in 1834.
Estate - - -	Interpretation of the Courts of Law	Restricted in 1722 and 1834. Not abolished.
Certificates, - -	Statute - - -	Out of use.

Certificates, now obsolete—like the indirect acknowledgment of settlement, on the part of parish officers, by granting non-resident relief—are rather a mode of inferring the existence of a settlement than a method for acquiring it.

The application of these heads of settlement, to any given case, is not wanted, as we have said, to determine that a pauper is to

be relieved; but to fix, which of two or more parishes is chargeable with his relief. The heads are numerous. It is important, however, to observe, that there is one fact or principle common to them all: they are already all, either directly or indirectly, more or less connected with residence. A child is born, for the most part, where his parents reside: if he derives a settlement from his father, that original settlement was probably dependent upon residence, and involved the condition of a year's service, or a dwelling in the parish for the statutory term of forty days. It is the same with the derivative settlement by marriage: the settlement transferred to the woman, though acquired to her by marriage, was in all probability gained by the man in one of those modes which required residence. The parochial consequences incident to residence, must always have been understood; and it follows that, to a certain extent, proprietors and rate-payers will have been always interested in diminishing the number of cottages in a given parish. So far is it from being true, that such an interest was introduced for the first time by the act of 1846.

The act of 1846 did not create a settlement by residence: it only imposed certain restrictions on removals; and this it did, by prohibiting the removal of poor persons who had dwelt in a parish for the term of five years, or who became chargeable under certain circumstances, such, for instance, as temporary sickness. The statute assumes that the obligation to relieve at once attaches to the parish where the necessity for relief arises: and while, on the one hand, it no longer allows a parish to transfer this burthen to another by means of an order of removal:—on the other hand, should a poor person once quit the parish in which he has resided the term of five years, he cannot be sent back to it, as if he had acquired a settlement there by such residence. Some of the witnesses before the committee of last session appear to have thought that it would have been wiser to have enacted a settlement by the five years' residence, rather than a mere exemption from removal. But it must be remembered that the former course would have been creating another new head of settlement, and another ground of removal. There are, moreover, other objections: a man may have resided in a parish for five years in the early part of his life, and may become chargeable at the age of sixty, never having gained a subsequent settlement elsewhere. In such a case the difficulties in the way of establishing the fact of the residence, and its character, would be enormous. They are by no means slight, even when the residence necessarily took place within the five years next preceding the application for the order of removal.



This act, however, is likely to be but temporary in its operation, and to serve only as a stepping-stone to future legislation. So far as it goes, its provisions are humane, and we believe that it has on the whole acted beneficially for the poor; although in this, as in other cases, unscrupulous persons have attempted to shift from their own shoulders, by indirect means, that burthen which the law did not allow them to transfer directly. Any suffering to the poor on such grounds, however, is the consequence, not of the act itself, but of the evasion of its provisions by those who are bound to execute it.

Mr. Bodkin's act of last session expires next year, if it should not be renewed: its effect is to cause the relief afforded to a certain class of paupers to be repaid from the union fund. The class in question consists of such persons as have been rendered irremovable by the first clause of the statute of 1846, and who had received relief from the parish of their settlement, whilst residing elsewhere, within twelve months of that statute coming in force. Mr. Bodkin's measure mitigates, in some degree, the pressure on particular places caused by the Removal Act: and, as recognising even for a temporary purpose, an area of charge wider than a single parish, it is of considerable importance.

Such are the principal provisions of the Law of Settlement and Removal, in force at present. Few subjects involve more serious considerations than the inquiry into the evils which are connected with it. These evils are of two kinds: first, those which directly affect the poor themselves; secondly, those which directly fall upon the rate-payers and the community at large. It is unnecessary to say, that what injures one of these classes, must ultimately react upon the other.

The number of orders of removal actually executed between the 1st of January, 1845, and the 1st of January, 1846, may be estimated at upwards of 4000. We began by stating how necessary it was at one time, that a power of removal should remain suspended *in terrorem* over labourers on becoming chargeable, but that this necessity had been latterly superseded: let us now see what the power of removal means, or may mean, when it is enforced. The execution of an order of removal has a familiar sound and is a simple proceeding, but what does it often imply? A labourer in an agricultural county has at some time or other snapped the chain of prejudice and law which bound him to his 'parish,' and has transferred himself to a manufacturing town, where in prosperous times he married, and brought up his children to a certain age. The day of pressure comes: after struggling for some time he applies for relief, conscious that in so doing he exposes himself to the chance of removal: relief is granted, and

an order of removal is obtained. The labourer, his wife, and children, are marched away at once from the place where he has formed new ties, where he married his wife, and where his children were born, to a remote parish in Wiltshire or Norfolk, with which he may now have no earthly connection, except that he or his father formerly lived there as a farm servant under a yearly hiring. When a man thus removed is delivered to the overseers, what can be done with him? His best hope is, that the expense of keeping him and his children in the Union workhouse, will drive some one of the farmers to employ him at work to which he is wholly unaccustomed: a cottage he must procure how he can; probably at a distance of three or four miles. No other alternative presents itself, except that of becoming a sort of vagabond relying on chance for his subsistence, until more prosperous times may allow him to return to the town whence he has been removed, taking back with him the fear of becoming again chargeable, in which case he will incur the penalties of the Vagrant Act.

We know a case in which the surgeon of a workhouse lately recommended relief to be given in another shape to a man in the workhouse, on the ground of fear 'that his present melancholy and earnest desire to return to Wigan (his former residence for upwards of twenty years) might ultimately, if disappointed, terminate in insanity.'

When a law directly inflicts such hardships on the poor, we naturally ask — where are the indirect advantages for the sake of which these hardships are imposed? What great economical object is secured by it to society at large, by means of which the labouring classes gain on one hand what they may lose by it on another? We are satisfied that no case of compensation, direct or indirect, can be made out. On the contrary, the Law of Settlement, as at present administered, not only fetters the industry and debases the character of the labourer: but, it also imposes on the employer such restraints in the choice of his workmen, as necessarily impede the most advantageous employment of his capital. The rural districts of England are cut up into small divisions (about fifteen thousand in number) of the most irregular shape and the most arbitrary size, varying in extent from a quarter of a mile each way, to an area of many square miles. A certain number of labourers are supposed to belong to each of these divisions: they are *settled* in it. The employers of labour in each parish know, that if one of the labourers thus attached to their division is thrown out of work or becomes destitute, whether by his own idleness and profligacy, or in consequence of any superabundance of hands in

the labour market, they will have to maintain him at the expense of the poor rates. Before the year 1834, they must have done so according to the discretion of any justice of the peace, to whom the labourer might apply; and they were thus at the mercy of that cheap humanity which is exercised at the cost of others. Under the present law, the board of guardians is enabled to offer the man the alternative of the workhouse: but still he and his family must be maintained by that particular parish. Now, what follows from this necessity?—the introduction of two conditions to obtaining work, each of them enough to disorganise the relation of the parties, and demoralise the industry of a parish. The first is, the possession of a settlement in the parish, to a rate-payer of which the labourer applies for work—the next, that he should be a married man; for a single man costs less to maintain in the workhouse, and is more likely to be driven to shift for himself. If a man fulfil these two conditions, then, and not till then, character and skill begin to tell. These latter qualities, instead of holding the first place in regulating the claim for employment and wages, have become, in consequence, secondary considerations. A farmer will not, if he can help it, take a notorious drunkard or a notorious idler; but, short of these extreme disqualifications, degrees of sobriety and industry have far less weight than such facts as relate to the man's settlement and the number of his family. The best man of a neighbouring parish may be out of work, and may offer his services to an employer who lives within half a mile of him; the latter would be too happy to take him if he could, instead of two or three idle vagabonds who are relying on the knowledge that, in case they are not retained as labourers, they and a score of children must be fed as paupers. Under these circumstances, employment is regulated, not by the skill of the competitors, but by considerations of a totally different complexion. The good labourer might, in a free and open market, earn twelve shillings a week; as it is, he can only obtain eight; and the reason, why he must rest content with the smaller sum, is because the law has made him, to all intents and purposes, practically ineligible, every where except in his own parish.

The first thing which strikes us in this picture, is the fact, that the sober and industrious labourer gets less wages, in order that the idle and profligate one may be maintained from one fund instead of another. The funds which would be applied to keep the latter are, indeed, apparently spared, and the cost is borne by his more deserving rival: but what is this, except that the good workman thus really pays poor-rates to support the bad? The moral influence of such a system is obvious. What con-

clusion can a labourer be expected to draw from these effects of the Law of Settlement, unless it be, that he will do well to marry early, and that a little more or less idleness is immaterial? The man calculates thus, 'I belong to the parish, and I must be employed; I have a family, and they would cost too much to keep if I were out of work. The farmers know better than that.'

With regard to the employer himself, such a system is obviously most injurious to his interests. The protection of the Corn Laws has, very properly, been taken from him: but it is a little hard that, whilst others may compete with him in the price of wheat and cattle, he is to be limited to the very narrowest market for providing himself with the labourers, who are to plough his land or tend his herds. He may not hire the best labourer he can get, unless he will undertake to keep, at his own expense, the drunken idler and his six children, whom that labourer would displace. We shall be told that the farmers are not clamorous for change: they are satisfied with things as they are. Even if this be so, it is no sufficient reason for demoralising the labourers. It is true that, from habit and want of reflection, the greater part of the farmers in the agricultural districts have become thoroughly imbued with the principle that the parish to which a man belongs, and not his ability to work, is the first point to be considered. No stronger argument can be adduced for a change. The very sense of interest, which is the soul of improvement in agriculture and in every other branch of economy, has been corrupted at its source by the Law of Settlement, which corrupts the labourers in their turn. But the real resources of the country can never be developed, the full productiveness of the soil will not be ascertained, until the farmer, like the manufacturer, knows where to seek for his best servants, and has the natural encouragement to hire them, when he has found them. All, indeed, are not so blind; the more intelligent among our agriculturists are fully aware of this difficulty, and appreciate the obstacle which it forms to any effectual progress in agriculture. They are unfortunately equally aware, how extensively public opinion is diseased upon the subject, and they are willing to perpetuate the abuse. We should have wished to support what we have stated by extracts from the evidence given before the committee of last session, but our limits will not permit of our doing so: we must be content, therefore, with hoping that our readers will refer to the evidence themselves.

There is another class of evils, of very great magnitude, which are caused, or, at any rate, deeply aggravated, by the Law of Settlement: we mean those connected with the habitations of the poor.

The size of parishes in England varies, as we have said, in the most arbitrary manner: they are frequently so small as to be in the hands of one proprietor, or to be divided among two or three. Now every mode of acquiring a settlement implies, either directly or indirectly, a residence in the parish on the part of either the pauper himself, or some one connected with him. In the case, therefore, of an undivided parish, there has always been in operation a strong interest to remove cottages, and prevent the accumulation of small houses. But it is obvious that in parishes, which are subdivided among many proprietors, the interests are reversed. The man, who owns only a small portion of land, will gain more by the immediate profit derived from the rent of cottages, than he can possibly lose by any contingent increase of the poor-rates on account of relief hereafter to be given to the parties, who may gain settlements or who may become chargeable whilst residing in his cottages. This feeling is the stronger because, according to the vicious practice which at present prevails, the rate, being levied on the occupier, is not, in general, paid at all on property thus tenanted: the cottager is excused on the ground of poverty, and the landlord gets the benefit of the exemption.

On the other hand, take the case of a large proprietor, owner of the entire parish. By systematically destroying cottages, or what is more common, by allowing them to fall into decay, he can reduce the cost of the poor in such a parish to nothing, or next to nothing: and he has every inducement to pursue this course.

Nor can he be much blamed. The law makes him master of his own property; he desires to manage it thriftily and well, and hand it down to his son unincumbered. If he has no land of his own in the next parish on which he can build cottages for his tenants' labourers, some speculator on the skirts of the nearest country town will probably have run up houses which are within two or three miles of the men's daily work. It is true that so much time is lost either to the master or to the man, and that the lot of the labourer is made still harder than it was before, by the addition to his daily task of a four or five miles walk; but the gain is certain—and this inconvenience, though a real disadvantage to the farmer—is not felt by the landlord in any sensible degree.

Unhappily, increase of distance from his work is not the worst evil hence inflicted on the poor man. The families of agricultural labourers thus get crowded into the suburbs of towns, or are thrust into cottages out of repair, the dimensions of which are wholly insufficient. As the children grow up, sons

and daughters, father and mother, sleep, it may be, in one room, under circumstances most unfavourable to morality. In times of fever or epidemic disease, the consequences are fearful in another way. Great positive suffering is inflicted, and the character of the labouring classes is seriously lowered.

We know that this scarcity of cottages has its use, as well as its disadvantages; and that the redundancy of population is checked by nothing so effectually as by the difficulty of finding a house. At the same time, the discomfort and degradation of the labouring man's family must not be lost sight of: they are most important elements in that part of the question which we are now discussing — more especially as the self-interest of the parties, the only consideration, really operative at present, is left to work out its natural consequences, without principle or distinction, irregularly and by chance.

This power of removing the burthen of poor-rates from a particular parish, because it happens to belong to one, two, or three proprietors, suggests another consideration, on which much is said in the evidence before the Settlement Committee. The labourers may work for my tenants, or for me, but they are settled in the next parish; and to the next parish, if they are sick or out of work, they necessarily become chargeable. My estate has been 'well managed;' that is to say, I avoid my share of the burthen of that tax which presses the heaviest of all on agricultural industry, and I throw it on my neighbours, who are not so fortunate as to possess estates, of which the limits correspond exactly with the limits of the parish. A most unfair and unequal burthen is thus cast on the rate-payers of one parish for the benefit of the adjoining property.

All evils connected with the demolition or decay of cottages will, no doubt, be aggravated for the time by the act of 1846, in consequence of its connecting the obligation of relief with a five years' residence; or to speak more correctly, in consequence of its having in these cases deprived parishes of their ancient remedy of removal. The effect, indeed, of this statute is somewhat diminished by Mr. Bodkin's bill of last session; but we look upon both acts as merely temporary palliations of certain special evils. They are steps taken in the right direction; but they have not placed us on a point where we can safely do more than rest for a moment, and look about us.

Such, in our opinion, are the principal evils arising out of the present operation of the Settlement Laws. It remains to discuss their remedies: and to consider how far the proceedings of the committee of last session warrant us in hoping

that the time for applying remedies, in the place of palliatives, is near at hand.

In all economical and political difficulties nothing is more common than to find a man who tells you that 'it is the simplest thing in the world,'—'that the adoption of his principle will solve the whole, and reduce every thing into order,'—as if economical difficulties admitted of a simple solution—as if the consideration did not, in fact, always end in the question, 'On which side, are there the fewest evils?'

A Law of Settlement is eminently a problem of this character. We have repeatedly heard and read of simple remedies for all its evils; but on examination, the simplicity of every such remedy will be found to depend on the fact, that the proposer of it looked straight before him at one or two points of the case, and left out all the objections to the right and left of the visual ray which had connected the object with his mind's eye—the simplicity was in the person. What we have to deal with is, in truth, a conflict of evils; in which case, common sense suggests that we should take all reasonable pains to be sure we choose the least, and that, whatever course we take, we should keep sounding our way from time to time. No course is free from difficulties of considerable magnitude, and no foresight can descry with certainty what new mischiefs may arise. But we cannot stand still. In this, as in all human affairs, when we have once made up our minds that the present state of things ought not to continue, we must not be deterred from an attempt at reformation by the risk of failure. Of course, we must first look at the whole case, on every side fully and carefully, and labour by prudence and careful amendment, to avoid the most urgent inconveniences resulting from the present law, and to impose on society the smallest practicable amount of new ones. We shall then have taken all the security against error which God enables us to take, and may call upon the most cautious nature to rest satisfied (to speak in Bentham language) with *maximising* the advantages, and *minimising* the disadvantages inherent in the subject.

Every one will admit, that in any change affecting the Law of Settlement, the following points ought to be steadily kept in view;—in the first place, as little restraint as possible should be inflicted upon the poor on the one hand, and upon the employer of labour on the other;—in the next, the incidence of the poor-rate, like that of any other tax, should be equally and fairly distributed over the whole community, avoiding any unreasonable interference with existing rights of property, or any

material diminution in those securities for economy and good management which we now possess.

Numerous schemes for amending the existing law are proposed by different witnesses in the evidence before us. We have not space for going through them all. Those which imply an abolition of all local charge, and the substitution of a national fund, we conceive to be utterly inadmissible. In saying this, we are not blind to the hardship of throwing the burthen of the poor on real property alone, nor do we dispute the justice of making the whole community contribute to the support of the destitute. It is not only possible, but probable, that it will become necessary hereafter for the legislature to reconsider the whole subject of rateability and rating, and to impose a portion of the poor-rate on kinds of property which now escape taxation.

We reserve this question, therefore, when we declare our belief that no effectual check can be devised for controlling an expenditure, so minute and so exposed to imposture as that of the poor rates necessarily is, unless the administration of it rest mainly with the rate-payers on the spot. They alone have adequate means for investigating and testing each separate application for relief, and are at the same time stimulated to put forth all their vigilance by the strongest sense of self-interest. With a national fund to draw on, both the farmers and manufacturers would, on the contrary, exhaust their ingenuity in contriving means for paying their own wages out of the rates. Nor would any possible army of public functionaries be large enough, or zealous enough, to defeat the devices in which workman and employer would be sure to think that they had a common cause. Parliament might grumble or storm at the increase of the annual votes: but what could be done? In the present state of public opinion, relief must be given; and it would be in vain to attempt to limit the grant in the gross, unless the million channels of fraud, through which the money would ooze out and demoralize the whole community, could be effectually stopped up. The patronage, too, connected with the detailed administration of the Poor Laws would be so enormous, as to excite the greatest jealousy when vested in the hands of any government. We own that we should consider a 'national rate,' as it is called, to be nearly equivalent to national bankruptcy, in the most corrupt and mischievous form of that calamity.

Other witnesses, equally anxious to abolish settlements, accompany their recommendation with less perilous innovations. They propose to fix for ever the charge of the poor within a union on the several parishes of which the union is composed, in the proportion of their payments towards the poor rates for a



certain number of years before the change. A union rate, so regulated, would in one sense increase the evil of the present accidental disparity between parish and parish, by making it perpetual. An instance of this has, in fact, already occurred in the Isle of Wight, where a local act fixed the rate of contribution of the several parishes in the island according to their average expenditure between the years 1768 and 1770. The result has been, that the parish of Newchurch, which includes Ryde, has increased in population from 1505 to 8203, and yet pays only at the rate of 1s. 8d. in the pound: whilst the parish of Shalfleet, which has only doubled its population during the same period, is charged as high as 4s. 2d. in the pound. In our opinion, it is essential to any system of contribution towards a common fund, based on the proportions of past expenditure, that it should ultimately correct itself by merging in an equal rate on property throughout the union or other district in which it is levied.

Of all the schemes set forth in the evidence before the committee, none is entitled to greater consideration than that of Mr. Richard Hall, the assistant poor law commissioner for the metropolitan district. It is impossible to speak with more intelligence, or with a more complete knowledge of his subject, than this gentleman exhibits; nevertheless, we cannot bring ourselves entirely to agree with him. He strives to secure advantages which are incompatible, we fear, one with the other, and, in grasping at too much, would probably lose what was most important. His plan consists of the following measures: The power of removal is to be abolished; every pauper is to be become chargeable to the place where he may happen to be; and each parish is to contribute to a common fund, in proportion to certain fixed averages founded on its former expenditure. But this principle of contribution is to go on only up to a certain point; if in any parish the limit of the average should be exceeded, the excess is to be then thrown upon a union fund, levied according to an uniform rate.

Mr. Hall thinks that by this means he could retain, or even augment, the interest which every parish has at present in repressing pauperism, and employing its poor; whilst he would, at the same time, avoid the excessive pressure which the abolition of removals might cast on too narrow an area. But it must be remarked, that this scheme leaves untouched, if it does not aggravate, the characteristic evils of what are termed 'close parishes;' that is to say, parishes (of course, they are generally small ones) in the hands of one or two proprietors. Such a proprietor, no doubt, would have to pay his share of the union fund, according to the valuation of the property in it; but he

will continue to have at least the same interest as he has at present, in diminishing the number of cottages on his estate, and in throwing his workmen into the adjoining parish. In fact, the interest might become stronger and more immediate than even under the present system. For, according to Mr. Hall's proposition, every poor man wanting relief is to be relieved in the parish where he may be at the time; and the continued cost of such relief is to remain with the said parish, until its rates have reached a certain definite maximum. Now, if in 1845 a man had been living in a 10*l*. cottage in a close parish, he might no doubt have gained a settlement there; so long, however, as he did not do so, the proprietors had no permanent interest in ejecting him; for on becoming chargeable, he became at the same time removable. But on the plan suggested by Mr. Hall, such a man is made at once chargeable to the parish where he may be living at the time, without its having any redress by removal, or any means of avoiding the burthen, until its expenditure shall have reached the fixed maximum, after which the cost of the pauper is to be thrown on the union. The proprietor of the small parish will, in this case, be obliged, in the first instance, to bear the cost of every pauper in it; it will be his first object therefore, to prevent the possibility of the charge occurring. A proprietor, bent on keeping down his rates below the *maximum*, will be comparatively indifferent to the assistance that any excess above the *maximum* must be borne by the Union.

The truth is, that there are certain advantages, and those considerable ones, connected with the incidence of the poor rates on a small area. This was felt by the Duke of Wellington when he pressed the principle of throwing the burthen on each electoral division in the original Irish poor law.\* There are, however, evils springing from the same source — evils which, in their own way, are, we believe, at least in England, the most serious of the two at the present moment. We cannot at one and the same time retain the benefits of a system, and escape its evils; we must make up our minds which set of advantages we will give up.

In fact, the area on which the burthen of a pauper's maintenance is to fall, is one of the main points to be decided in any

\* There is a very instructive chapter (xi) on the Irish Poor Law in a book lately published, 'The Condition and Prospects of Ireland,' by Jonathan Pim. His comparison of the different bearings of a smaller or larger area of poor law taxation in England and in Ireland is entitled to great consideration.

amendment of the Law of Settlement. If that circle is made too wide, as in the case of a national rate, then all the wholesome safeguards of self-interest in the administration of relief are altogether abandoned; if it is too narrow, then all the petty jobbing of parochial feelings and interests ties the labourer to the soil, and fetters the choice of the farmer. Our endeavour should be to select an area sufficiently narrow to preserve the element of interested control over the expenditure, and sufficiently wide to do away with the possibility of combination by either destroying cottages or restricting the employment of labour.

We have now finished our brief survey of the evils of our present Law of Settlement and Removal; and have expressed our opinion of the principles upon which any substantial improvement of it can alone proceed. It is important to ascertain, how far there is a hope or prospect before us, of any such amendment in the law. For this purpose we must have recourse to the proceedings of the committee, as recorded in their seventh and eighth reports. These proceedings will inform us, what are the leanings of those individual members whose intelligence and experience command the highest respect, and whose opinions, as statesmen and members of a government, are most likely to determine the decision.

At the beginning, considerable time was wasted by Mr. Bankes and one or two other members of the committee, in an ineffectual endeavour to rescind the act of the preceding session, by which persons who had resided five years in a parish were rendered irremovable. It is clear, no change in the law of removal can be made, without causing temporary confusion and hardship in individual cases; but it is equally clear, that after this confusion and hardship had in part been once gone through, to reverse the machinery would be only to repeat the suffering anew, and to undo whatever good may have been effected.

We wish that we had space to analyse the proceedings of the committee in detail, and to lay them before our readers; but we must content ourselves with stating, that on the 22d of June the committee had in fact agreed to the following resolutions:—

‘1. Resolved, “That the Law of Settlement and Removal is generally productive of hardship to the poor, and injurious to the working classes, by impeding the free circulation of labour.”

‘2. Resolved, “That it is injurious to the employers of labour, and impedes the improvement of agriculture.”

‘3. Resolved, “That it is injurious to the ratepayers, by occasioning expense in litigation and removal of paupers.”

'4. Resolved, "That the power of removing destitute poor persons from one parish to another in England and Wales, be abolished."

'5. Resolved, "That as the total abolition of the power of removing paupers within England and Wales, would have the effect of greatly increasing the burthens of particular parishes, it is advisable that some change should at the same time be made in the distribution of the burthen of relieving the poor."

'6. Resolved, "That the narrowness of the area of chargeability is one great source of the evils above adverted to, as well as of others arising from the interest of landowners and ratepayers in preventing the residence within that area of persons likely to become chargeable."

'7. Resolved, "That it is therefore desirable to extend the area of rating for the relief of the poor."

'8. Resolved, "That Unions would form the fittest areas for that object."

'9. Resolved, "That with a view to render the working of a system of union rating more just and equal, it would be advisable to facilitate, in certain cases, the alteration of the limits of existing Unions in England and Wales."

It was then proposed to report these resolutions to the House. But, by one of those changes which constantly occur in committees, and which are often dependent more on temper than on the rational conviction of individual members, the following division took place:—

**Ayes, 5.**

Sir James Graham.  
Sir George Grey.  
Mr. Thomas Duncombe.  
Lord H. Vane.  
Mr. P. Scrope.

**Noes, 6.**

Mr. Banks.  
Mr. E. Denison.  
Mr. W. Miles.  
Mr. Borthwick.  
Mr. Bodkin.  
Mr. Henley.

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The committee thus ended by reporting the evidence, and by expressing their conviction, that although they did not submit 'for the consideration of the House any specific plan for the amendment of the law, they feel confident that their labours will not prove useless, inasmuch as they have brought together a large mass of valuable information, and fixed public attention on those points which require especial consideration in any attempt to legislate on a subject of such great importance to the interests of the poor, and the general well-being of the country.'

We believe that the resolutions quoted above embody the principles, which must form the basis of any judicious alteration in the Law of Settlement; and it is with no little satisfaction that we see the names of Sir James Graham and Sir George

Grey, the late and present Secretaries for the Home Department, supporting such propositions. We will add, that in our opinion the safest practical course for giving effect to any plan of this description would be, to cause, for the next seven years, the several parishes in the union to contribute to the union fund in the proportion of their respective expenditure for the last seven. At the end of seven years from the change, the guardians should be required to make a union rate on a fair and equal valuation: when, for another period of seven years, the rate of contribution between the parishes should be regulated according to a ratio, compounded equally of the past averages and this union rate. At the end of the second seven years we would strike out altogether the element of former expenditure, and would levy the contributions of each parish equally, on the scale of a rate assessed according to a valuation to be carefully revised and readjusted at short intervals.\*

It would follow from the adoption of such a scheme, that removals, with all their consequences, would immediately cease; and that, at the end of fourteen years from the passing of the act, the burthen of maintaining the poor would have become a charge on the property of the union, without, however, any such sudden change in the incidence of the tax as might cause a violent shock to existing interests or rights of property.

Let us consider more in detail what would be got rid of by this series of measures.

The hardship on the poor of actual removal would no longer exist. All power of limiting the number of cottages, simply for the purpose of avoiding the burthen on a particular parish, would be taken away. Two or three proprietors may now combine: but the owners of land in so large an area as an union cannot possibly act upon an experiment of this kind; even if, the abolition of settlement, and the diffusion of the charge of relief over a wider area, should leave them an adequate motive for so doing. The poor man would have a better chance of living where his work was wanted, and of procuring sufficient accommodation for his family as they grew up. The effect of the present law on his character would cease. Whether he was to be hired by a particular farmer would no longer depend upon the fact, whether he was already settled in the parish in which that farmer paid his rates; but on the question, whether his own habits and his own industry made him worth hiring. He

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\* As we have already stated, the question of what kinds of property should contribute to the rate is distinct and separate from our present subject, and would require careful consideration.

would reap the consequences of his own conduct, without those consequences being overruled by the accident of his own or his father's settlement. If a good workman and a single man, he would no longer, as now, get less wages: under which disguise, many an honest labourer is at present virtually paying what the parish would otherwise have to pay as poor rates, in order to support an idle neighbour and his family, at a lower rate than they would cost in the workhouse. Lastly, in case of sickness he would have no difficulty in obtaining relief; the obligation could not be thrust off by an order of removal, nor could he be transferred to some distant parish, in which he knew no one and was known by no one.

The scheme proposed has another positive merit. It equalises the charge on the rate-payers. At the end of fourteen years, an equal assessment on the whole union would be raised for the support of such poor as became chargeable therein: and no part of the land would escape from its fair share of the burthen of the district. Nor is this principle new to the English poor law. By the 43d of Elizabeth, the justices are empowered to impose rates in aid of neighbouring parishes: that is to say, to spread the pressure over a wider surface, when it has become intolerable within the narrower circle. Supposing the proposed change to be thus gradually introduced, we do not see that it is likely to bring along with it any real grievance—at all events, none which will not be less sensibly felt by all parties than the grievances of the present system.

We noticed at the beginning of the article, that the only active check on pauperism formerly, was the fear of removal. So long as there were no efficient workhouses, and so long as the administration of relief was not in the hands of the rate-payers themselves, the putting an end to removals, by abolishing settlements, might reasonably be regarded as a critical experiment. But, had the apprehension been less reasonable than it was, it must be remembered that a drowning man will catch at a straw; and, under the old poor law, the whole landed property of England was felt to be at stake. The case, however, is now altered—the tide has turned—direct remedies have been applied, and the rate-payers, as represented at Boards of Guardians, have the power of protecting themselves by the offer of the workhouse, and by a stringent administration of relief. It would, therefore, be manifestly wrong and impolitic to retain the costly and oppressive process of removal for the sake of its indirect action on pauperism: more especially as this indirect action was constantly producing a practical denial of all relief, in cases where relief was most needed.

Another objection to a union fund originates in the fear that the Board of Guardians would cease to exercise equal vigilance over the relief afforded, as soon as every guardian felt that a fractional portion only of the half-a-crown a week, which he was awarding, would be borne by his own parish. We think there is a fallacy in this. With a union fund, the interest of each individual guardian, taken separately, presses less in favour of economy in cases of relief arising in his own parish — cases, which under a parochial rate, must necessarily be met entirely out of the parish funds. But, on the other hand, with a union fund, *every* member of the board acquires an interest in *every* case in which relief is given; whereas, now, all may be comparatively indifferent, except when their own parish is concerned. Practically, we know that guardians at present, as a body, are quite as vigilant in resisting extravagance in salaries and charges borne by the union at large, as they are in restraining the allowance of relief. Moreover, there are two sides to this objection more frequently than would at first appear: it often happens now at a Board of Guardians, that a particular guardian opposes to the utmost the proposal to place a lunatic in an asylum, when the unhappy man ought without doubt to be at once sent thither, because the burthen of eight or ten shillings a week would be intolerable on a small parish. Such objections are listened to with favour by the board, the hardship of the expense is admitted, and they neglect, as a body, to do what their duty requires. If this weekly payment — some eight or ten shillings — fell on the union, scenes of this description would be far less likely to occur. We believe that, with a union rate, all the ordinary forms of extravagant expenditure and parish jobbing would be more effectually controlled than they are at present; whilst the occasional cases, in which humanity and justice demand a considerable outlay, would probably be dealt with more humanely and more promptly.

There are, indeed, other objections to any scheme, such as we are now venturing on the whole to recommend, which will require to be well weighed and provided against.

The first is one which long passed current, and which was worked with some success by the daily press, in opposition to Sir James Graham's propositions for amending the Law of Settlement.

“What!” it was said, ‘will you sever that tie of affection which binds the poor man to his birthplace — which attaches him to the home and grave of his fathers — which is the link between him and his parish — hallowed as it is by its associations with the Church?’

Fortunately, this species of false sentiment has pretty nearly run itself out by this time, without requiring any effort on our part to refute it. Men have learnt the fact, that the metaphorical tie in question is not a very tender one: since, being interpreted, it will ordinarily mean a removal from the place where a man has worked and lived, to a parish where he may be unknown, and where he is welcomed by the workhouse. To all persons any way conversant with the reality, nothing can appear more hopelessly romantic than an attempt to connect such things as the examinations before the magistrates, the order of removal, the appeal to quarter sessions, the certiorari, and all the trickery of parish officers and parish attorneys, with considerations of a pathetic character. As a matter of fact, under no possible circumstances are a poor man's feelings less consulted than in removals. It cannot be otherwise. After all, too, there is nothing particularly touching in the reflection, that a man's father worked as an apprentice in a parish some forty years before, or that he rented a house there worth ten pounds, or that he himself was hired there for a year, or had paid rates in it. Nor is the sentimental invocation, addressed to the parish church, if it were otherwise good for anything, worth much in practice. In the north of England at least, the poor are commonly relieved, not in parishes, but in townships, separated one from the other, under the statute of the 13th and 14th of Charles II. The parochial tie is already gone.

Another of the objections to which we were alluding, is much more grave, especially at the present time. Supposing removals, in the case of English paupers, to be abolished, in what way will it be practicable to restrain the influx of Irish paupers, who have poured into Liverpool and the western ports in such frightful numbers, during the last year? Can England abolish settlement, and yet retain the power of sending back such of our unfortunate fellow countrymen from Ireland or Scotland, as may become chargeable within the peculiar jurisdiction of the English poor law? Any such power must be exercised with caution and humanity; but, assuming that it is right in itself, we see no difficulty in its retention. The legislature may abolish settlement, as between parish and parish in England, without admitting the principle, that there is to be an unimpeded flow of pauperism from one division of the empire to another. The Irish have now a poor law of their own; so has Scotland—each with its own specialities—and we think, that any Englishman, Scotchman, or Irishman, becoming chargeable in a division of the empire to which he does not belong, might properly be sent back; so that



in each of the three kingdoms the burthen may ultimately fall on the property originally liable to it. As regards the individual himself, it is only on requiring aid from the public fund that he will be compelled to forego the exercise of his personal liberty, as to where he shall remove or live—a restriction, similar in principle to that of the vagrant acts. Nor, on the other hand, could English rate-payers reasonably object to an arrangement, by which the continuous residence, without chargeability, of a Scotchman or an Irishman in the same union for the space of seven years, should exempt him from removal.

The English settlement laws have been left far in arrear of our other branches of poor law legislation. But the time has gone by, when the subject might be abandoned to the chance mercies of individual members of Parliament and country gentlemen, however versed in the business of quarter sessions. It must be taken up and legislated upon, on principle and system, by the Government: it does not admit of delay: the legislation of the last two sessions cannot be considered as permanent: nor, lastly, do we see that any possible benefit can be derived from another committee, or from further inquiry. Abundant materials are collected for enabling Parliament and the country to form a judgment on the whole matter of Settlement Law; and fresh evidence would only overlay and complicate the inquiry, without furnishing additional information of any real value. The proceedings of the late committee satisfy us, that the most intelligent and practised statesmen of both parties have arrived at a sound conclusion on the question—as much the people's question as any which was ever called so;—and, this being so, we feel confident that the good sense of the House of Commons will not allow the truth to be sacrificed, either to personal animosities or party jealousies, private objects or public clamour. Our economical prosperity, agricultural and manufacturing, is deeply concerned in the correction of a system, which has compromised too long the interests of both; and which—worst of all—in its errors and abuses, has touched to the quick the happiness of the poor from one end of England to the other.

ART. VII.—*Memoirs of the Life of John Constable, Esq., R.A., composed chiefly of his Letters.* By C. R. LESLIE, R.A. 2nd ed. Longman and Co.

It is rare, in the present rapid diffusion of light literature, that we have it in our power to call attention to a work of general interest, the contents of which have not been previously

made known through the earlier channels of literary communication. But this is the case, we believe, with Mr. Leslie's life of Constable: a very amusing, and in one point of view instructive book. It appears, indeed, to have reached a second edition; we suspect, nevertheless, that its readers have been confined within that particular circle, out of which genius of a certain class must consent to take its audience, 'fit though few.'

Constable was a landscape painter, and nearly the contemporary of Turner. In one respect too, their fortune has been alike. With many devoted admirers, the works of both have proved 'caviare to the general.' For different reasons, however. Unlike his more celebrated contemporary, Constable's offences against the public taste were not perpetrated in white and gold, in misty and unknown tints and shapes, or by aspiring after what was undefined and grand. His idea of nature was the low and the humble, his livery was green and silver; heavy sweeping clouds, wind, rain, and the sparkling dew, were the types by which he interpreted his impressions and his conception of the picturesque. Few, perhaps, ever saw a painting by him of a glowing sunset, or of the brown and mellow tints of autumn. The modest scenes of the Valley of the Stour, its villages and verdant meadows—dusky barges, sluices, canals, old posts and fat weeds—but, above all, wind and water mills—were the subjects from which Constable drew his inspiration, and in the representation of which he mainly sought to display his art.

A celebrated judge, now dead, used to maintain that there was no such thing as bad port wine—willingly admitting, however, that one kind of port might be much better than another. Without committing ourselves to the full extent of this grave position, we are inclined to adopt it as regards Biographies. How few are there which do not excite interest, however quiet or obscure the subject! While of all the forms which Biography can assume, that in which the author makes his hero, by means of letters or other writings, tell his own story, is certainly the most engaging. Of this captivating, yet unambitious class, Hayley's life of Cowper may be taken to be the best example: and Mr. Leslie has wisely followed it.

Constable was the son of a miller, well to do in the world, who resided at East Bergholt, a village situated in the most cultivated part of Suffolk, and overlooking the valley of the Stour. 'The beauty of the surrounding scenery, its gentle declivities, its luxuriant meadow flats sprinkled with flocks and herds, its well-cultivated uplands, its woods and rivers, with numerous scattered villages and churches, farms and picturesque cottages,

‘all impart to this spot an amenity and elegance hardly any where else to be found.’ This is Constable’s description of the ‘scenes of his boyhood,’ and which he was fond of saying ‘made him a painter.’ It is worthy of remark, that Suffolk, the poorest of all our counties in what is termed grand scenery, not only made Constable a landscape painter, but has also the credit, probably, of having created the beautiful and purely English landscapes of Gainsborough: for Gainsborough was born at Sudbury, within fourteen miles of Bergholt; and the nature, which he also first loved, must have been the pastoral scenery of the Stour.

Like all subjects of biography, high or low, Constable had his ancestors. But with these we do not trouble our readers, though, as a biographer, it was part of Mr. Leslie’s bounden duty to do so; neither do we say much for the amount of his school progress. An early passion for drawing, and consequently a slow progress in the Latin grammar and long division sums — a turn for sketching houses, and carts, and dogs, instead of learning prosody, are tastes common to many boys who never become painters: just as a taste for the army or navy, in preference to lessons, is common to many who never become either Nelsons or Wellingtons. Young Constable had a humble friend, who was devoted to painting, and with him he used to draw and paint. His father, though not frowning on the intimacy, was unwilling that his son should become a professional artist. It argued, observes Mr. Leslie, himself a painter, ‘no want of affection or foresight in his father, that he opposed his son’s choice of a profession in which future excellence cannot, with any certainty, be predicted from early attempts; and in which, even if attained, it is less sure, than excellence in many other pursuits, of securing a competency.’

His father would have educated him for the church, but for this he had no vocation. He was accordingly employed in the mill for about a year, and became, from his comely person, ‘the handsome young miller’ of the neighbourhood. An outline of the mill in which he worked may still be seen neatly carved on one of its timbers. His acquaintance with the picturesque machinery of wind and water mills was very useful to him afterwards in his artist life; and his brother observed to Mr. Leslie, ‘When I look at a mill painted by John, I see that it will go round:’ which is not always the case with those painted by other artists. His own praise of Rembrandt’s mill, as ‘an epoch in Art,’ went on still higher grounds.

By a wind-miller every change of the sky is watched with peculiar interest; and it appears from Constable’s description

of an engraving of the mill in which he worked, ~~that the time~~ spent as a miller was, in this particular also, not wholly lost to him as a painter.

‘It may, perhaps, give some idea of one of those bright and silvery days in the spring when, at noon, large garish clouds, surcharged with hail or sleet, sweep with their broad shadows the fields, woods, and hills; and, by their depths, enhance the value of the vivid greens and yellows so peculiar to the season. The natural history, if the expression may be used, of the skies which are so particularly marked in the hail squalls at this time of the year, is this:—The clouds accumulate in very large masses, and, from their loftiness, seem to move but slowly: immediately upon these large clouds appear numerous opaque patches, which are only small clouds passing rapidly before them, and consisting of isolated portions, detached, probably, from the larger cloud. These, floating much nearer the earth, may perhaps fall in with a stronger current of wind, which, as well as their comparative lightness, causes them to move with greater rapidity; hence they are called by wind-millers and sailors *messengers*, and always portend bad weather. They float midway in what may be termed the lanes of the clouds; and from being so situated, are almost uniformly in shadow, receiving a reflected light only from the clear blue sky immediately above them. In passing over the bright parts of the large clouds, they appear as darks; but in passing over the shadowed parts, they assume a grey or pale, or a lurid hue.’

Constable's mother procured him an introduction to the late Sir George Beaumont (himself both an artist and a patron of artists), while visiting the Dowager Lady Beaumont, then living in Suffolk. Sir George discovered promise in the humble copies of the young miller; and it was at the house of Lady Beaumont that Constable first saw a picture of Claude,—the Annunciation, as it is called in the Catalogue of the National Gallery, though Mr. Leslie thinks it represents the first flight of Hagar. This picture was so great a favourite with Sir G. Beaumont, that he always carried it with him when he travelled; and though he gave it to the nation in 1826 together with his other pictures, after a time he requested to have it back again for his life. ‘Constable,’ observes Mr. Leslie, ‘looked back on the first sight of this exquisite work as an important epoch in his life; but the taste of the young artist is always the most affected by contemporary art. Sir G. Beaumont possessed about thirty drawings in water colour, by Girtin, which he advised Constable to study as examples of breadth and truth; and their influence on him may be traced more or less through the whole course of his practice. The first impressions of an artist, whether for good or for evil, are never wholly effaced; and as Constable had till now no opportunity of seeing any

'pictures that he could rely on as guides to the study of nature, it was fortunate for him that he began with Claude and Girtin.'

In 1795 his father consented to his visiting London, to ascertain what might be his chance of success; and he obtained an introduction to Farrington, a painter now deservedly forgotten, but a man of sense, — who was useful to him in the advice he gave him, and who early predicted 'that his style of landscape would one day form a distinct feature in the art.'

He divided himself at first between London and Bergholt, making copies of such pictures as came in his way: and reading books on Art. At this period he painted some figure subjects; which Mr. Leslie admits have little merit; and at last it was determined that he should return home and employ himself in his father's business, — by which, as his mother expressed it, he would at once please his father and ensure his own respectability. It is not known how long he remained at home; but in 1799 he was admitted a student of the Royal Academy. On resuming the pencil, he never again laid it aside; and he appears to have been as unremitting in his general studies, as in the practice of copying whatever Claudes, Ruysdaels, and Wilsons were within his reach.

In 1802 Constable's name appears for the first time as an exhibitor at the Academy; it is possible some earlier pictures had been rejected in previous years.

'Those of my brother artists who remember the Academy twenty years ago will not have forgotten Samuel Strowger, the most symmetrical of models in the life school, and the best of servants to the institution. He was a Suffolk man, and had worked on a farm in Constable's neighbourhood, where he was distinguished, in the country phrase, as "a beautiful ploughman," until he enlisted in the Life Guards, where his strict attention to his duties soon acquired for him the character of the best man in his regiment. The models of the Academy are generally selected from these fine troops. Sam was chosen; and the grace of his attitudes, his intelligence, and steadiness, induced the Academy to procure his discharge, and to place him in the institution as head porter and occasional model. Sam and Constable, who had known each other in Suffolk, were thus brought together again in London; and Strowger showed his readiness to patronize his old acquaintance, as far as lay in his power, by interceding, when he could venture to do so, during the arrangements of the exhibitions, in behalf of his works. As they were generally views in Suffolk, they had peculiar charms in Sam's eyes, and he could vouch for the accuracy with which they represented all the operations of farming. He was captivated by one of them — "A Corn-field, with Reapers at work," and pointed out to the arranging committee its correctness: "the *lord*," as the leading man among reapers and

mowers is called in Suffolk, being in due advance of the rest. But, with all his endeavours to serve his friend, the picture was either rejected or not so well placed as he wished; and he consoled Constable, and at the same time apologised for the members of the committee, by saying, "Our gentlemen are all great artists, sir, but they none of them know anything about the *lord*." (P. 12. Life.)

Constable, at a subsequent period, under disappointment at the rejection of one of his pictures, carried it to Mr. West; who said, 'Don't be disheartened, young man, we shall hear of you again; you must have loved nature very much before you could have painted this:' he took a piece of chalk, and showed him how he might improve the chiaroscuro, by some additional touches of light between the stems and branches of the trees, saying, 'Always remember, sir, that light and shadow *never stand still*.' Constable said it was the best lecture, (because a practical one,) on chiaroscuro he ever heard. Mr. West at the same time said to him, 'Whatever object you are painting, keep in mind its prevailing character rather than its accidental appearance (unless in the subject there is some peculiar reason for the latter), and never be content till you have transferred that to the canvass. In your skies, for instance, always aim at brightness, although there are states of the atmosphere in which the sky itself is not bright. I do not mean that you are not to paint solemn or lowering skies, but even in the darkest effects there should be brightness. Your darks should look like the dark of silver, not of lead or slate.'

All homage to those who encourage either genius or application in the young and ardent, so often doomed to disappointed hopes! Of what priceless value have some few words of encouragement often been to sanguine but modest spirits, entering on the first struggle of life in pursuit of knowledge and of fame! Yet how many are there who forget this, and by selfishness or indifference let others lose the way — which it would have cost them little more than the lifting of their finger to have shown — or let the flame go out, which, with a breath, they might have kept alive!

From henceforth Constable devoted himself to his art. His genius had been formed by his birthplace: he took from it his own immediate view of nature, and of the garb in which he thought he could exhibit her to most advantage. To this resolution he adhered so strictly, that he refused (in many cases we are of opinion unwisely, and in this we think we collect that Mr. Leslie agrees) to look at the works of others, that is, to see nature through others' eyes, as he chose to call

it. Excepting Claude and Ruysdael, Gainsborough and Wilson, he seems to have cared little for any painter. In revenge, as it were, and from some objection taken to his conception or execution, the public, on the other hand, cared as little for him; and, beyond a select circle, his pictures, to the day of his death, were neither sought after nor admired.

The few attempts which he made at historical painting, and occasionally, as a matter of profit, at painting portraits, are not worth noticing. His whole course of real study was given to landscape, and, as we have already observed, to one kind of landscape only — that of the low flat meadows of the Stour. The grander scenes of nature afforded him no pleasure. He had early made a tour to Westmorland and Cumberland, and he painted a few subjects from his sketches. But he was soon aware that he had got there, upon what was to him the wrong side of nature. The solitude of the mountains oppressed his spirits; he could not allow for the want of human associations: he required villages, churches, farm-houses, and cottages; — and this, in Mr. Leslie's opinion, as much from natural temperament as from first impressions. His first love in landscape abided by him to the last. There is a similar passage in the life of Cowper. Olney, and its sluggish streams and willows, had first inspired him with the love of the country; and when Hayley tempted him to visit Earham, situated near the finest part of the South Downs, far from having his mind elevated by the grander scenery, he, too, was oppressed by it, and almost overcome. The same, to a certain extent, has been observed of Crabbe.

We regret that we have not space to follow Constable's studies through their detail. The picture of his perseverance is the moral and the charm of Mr. Leslie's work. Constable was, at times, a little soured by the injustice of critics and the cold looks of patrons; yet, from the beginning of his course to its end, neither persuasion nor profit could ever tempt him to swerve from his endeavour to attain excellence in that one style, which he had determined was the best in itself, or, at least, the best for him. He had chosen his line from the first, when he remarked, — ‘there is yet room for a natural painter.’ In a letter to Mr. Fisher he observes, ‘I do not enter into the notion of varying one's plans to keep the public in good humour; change of weather and effects will always afford variety. What if Vander Velde had quitted his sea pieces, and Ruysdael his waterfalls, and Hobbins his native woods: the world would have lost so many features in art. I know that you wish for no material alteration, but I have to combat from high quar-

ters, even from Lawrence, the plausible argument, that the subject makes the picture. Perhaps you think an evening effect might do; it might start me some new admirers, but I should lose many old ones. *I imagine myself driving a nail; I have driven it some way, and, by persevering, I may drive it home; by quitting it to attack others, though I may amuse myself, I do not advance beyond the first, whilst the particular nail stands still.*

When most mortified, he still looked forward to better judges; his scorn of mannerists and connoisseurs increased; and his confidence in his own powers never deserted him. His spirit fully entitles him to the benefit of the charitable provision by which, it is said, the French law allows impunity to the losing advocate and his client during a certain period for their abuse of the judge. In addition to his want of success in his profession, he had to suffer the ills of a long and lingering attachment. In his father's parish there was a rich clergyman, a Dr. Rhudde, whose daughter had married Mr. Bicknell, then solicitor to the Admiralty. This led to an acquaintance between Constable and one of Mr. Bicknell's daughters; and the acquaintance to an attachment. The doctor, however, who was rich, set his face against the match; some parish quarrel with Constable's father — indeed, some whisper of a caricature of the doctor himself by the artist — perhaps, too, some aristocratic feeling regarding a man who was not only a painter without patrons, but a miller's son — were likely enough to make him no very acceptable suitor, in the eyes of either the father or the grandfather. Not so with the young lady, whose heart surrendered early to the 'handsome young miller.' Accordingly, he never lost hope, though doomed to a long servitude; cheered with only stolen interviews at exhibitions, or during morning walks in the park, or with an occasional letter. It was in vain that she released him from all claim — he remained firm. The same hope, that animated him in his profession, kept up his courage, and he at last won her. The letters from the lady are full of good sense and kindness. Though she loved, she loved wisely, and would not be tempted to do otherwise than as her father wished. The young and ardent will find these letters tempered with a stronger infusion of prudence than is popular or usual on these occasions. An income of 400*l.* a-year for a new married couple is spoken of with more doubt and disparagement than the advocates of love in a cottage can be expected to admire. Malthus himself could have found no fault with the correspondence; which however — much as it may fall short of the standard of romance — gave ample promise of the good and



amiable wife she proved. Every body must be glad to learn, that his perseverance was better rewarded in love than in the arts. His wife and children formed the happiness of his life; and were a more than sufficient compensation for the frowns of critics, and the niggardliness of patrons. Even the surly old grandfather relented, and left them a good legacy.

Although the public in general did not hold out a helping hand to Constable, yet there were some who recognised in his fresh and vivid pictures a species of merit and a promise of future excellence, which the world would not or could not see. Among these was the late Archdeacon Fisher, one of his earliest and most steady patrons; whose letters appear to us to be models in their way, whether they are regarded as the letters of a zealous friend, or of a judicious, though perhaps partial, critic. Sir G. Beaumont also, from whom he had received early advice, continued his friend. In 1823, Constable made a long visit to him, at Coleorton Hall. The letters, which he wrote while staying there, are interesting, from their description of the well-ordered establishment of the country house of an English gentleman, as also from the effect produced on him for the time, by an order and regularity so new to him. For these were qualities in which our painter was greatly deficient: and the sight of them naturally led to divers good resolutions—to end, however, as all such resolutions generally end.

Sir George Beaumont differed widely from Constable in his views on Art: Sir George was a conventionalist of the old school,—Constable was working out a problem of his own. We shall presently consider the question which their different views gave rise to. The contrast is very happily illustrated by Mr. Leslie:—

‘Though they agreed generally in their opinions of the old masters, yet their tastes differed materially on some points of art, and their discourse never languished for want of “an animated no!” A constant communion with pictures, the tints of which are subdued by time, no doubt tends to unfit the eye for the enjoyment of freshness; and Sir George thought Constable too daring in the modes he adopted to obtain this quality; while Constable saw that Sir George often allowed himself to be deceived by the effects of time, of accident, and by the tricks that are, far oftener than is generally supposed, played by dealers, to give mellowness to pictures; and in these matters each was disposed to set the other right. Sir George had placed a small landscape, by Gaspar Poussin, on his easel, close to a picture he was painting, and said, “Now, if I can match these tints, I am sure to be right.” “But suppose, Sir George,” replied Constable, “Gaspar could rise from his grave, do you think he would know his own picture in its present state? or, if he did, should we not find it difficult to per-

suade him that somebody had not smeared tar or cart grease over its surface, and then wiped it imperfectly off?" At another time, Sir George recommended the colour of an old Cremona fiddle for the prevailing tone of every thing, and this Constable answered by laying an old fiddle on the green lawn before the house. Again, Sir George, who seemed to consider the autumnal tints necessary, at least to some part of a landscape, said, "Do you not find it very difficult to determine where to place your *brown tree*?" And the reply was, "Not in the least, for I never put such a thing into a picture." But however opposite in these respects their opinions were, and although Constable well knew that Sir George did not appreciate his works — the intelligence, the wit, and the fascinating and amiable manners of the Baronet had gained his heart, and a sincere and lasting friendship existed between them.

In a life of this kind one picks up some odd pieces of gossip. Few of our readers, perhaps, ever thought that the jolly old alderman, Sir W. Curtis (celebrated as the consumer of turtle and all other good things, and for the more discreditable weakness of being vain of the friendship of George the Fourth), was also a real lover of the fine arts, especially of the fresh and pure in landscape. During a long illness he had a picture by Gainsborough hung in his chamber, that he might see it through the opening of his bed-curtains. We must reckon him, too, among our artist's patrons: he is mentioned, at least, as having had a hankering after one of his best pictures. His feeling for Art and his choice of subjects were of a higher kind, than those of his royal friend. In a letter to Archdeacon Fisher, Constable says, 'We dined with Sir W. Curtis; he is a fine old fellow, and is now sitting for his portrait to Lawrence for the King, who desired it in these words: "D—n you, my old boy, I'll have you in all your canonicals, and then I can look at you every day,"—he is a great favourite—birds of a feather, &c.——'

Constable, by this time, had forced himself into notice. In 1819 he was elected an associate of the Royal Academy, and afterwards attained its full honours. The following extract describes the effect and character of one of what Mr. Leslie considered the best of Constable's works, at the same time that it expresses his estimate of their value:—

'His art was never more perfect, perhaps never so perfect, as at this period of his life. I remember being greatly struck by a small picture, a view from Hampstead Heath, which I first saw at *Ruysdael House*, as Mr. Fisher called his residence in Keppel Street. I have before noticed that what are commonly called warm colours are not necessary to produce the impression of warmth in landscape, and this

picture affords to me the strongest possible proof of the truth of this.\* The sky is of the blue of an English summer day, with large, but not threatening, clouds of a silvery whiteness. The distance is of a deep blue, and the near trees and grass of the freshest green; for Constable could never consent to parch up the verdure of nature, to obtain warmth. These tints are balanced by a very little warm colour on a road and gravel pit in the foreground, a single house in the middle distance, and the scarlet jacket of a labourer. Yet I know no picture in which the mid-day heat of Midsummer is so admirably expressed; and were not the eye refreshed by the shade thrown over a great part of the foreground by some young trees that border the road, and the cool blue of water near it, one would wish, in looking at it, for a parasol, as Fuseli wished for an umbrella when standing before one of Constable's showers. I am writing of this picture, which appears to have been painted in the open air, after an acquaintance with it of five-and-twenty years; and on referring to it again and again, I feel my first impressions, whether right or wrong, entirely confirmed. At later periods of his life Constable aimed, and successfully, at grander and more evanescent effects of nature; but in copying her simplest aspects, he never surpassed such pictures as this; and which, I cannot but think, will obtain for him, when his merits are fully acknowledged, the praise of having been the most genuine painter of English landscape that has yet lived.'

Constable, in his work on English Landscape, has also given us his own view of his art: he says, 'It is the desire of the author 'in this publication to increase the interest for, and promote the 'study of, the rural scenery of England, with all its endearing 'associations, and even in its most simple localities,—of England, 'with her climate of more than vernal freshness, in whose summer skies and rich autumnal clouds, "in thousand liveries "dight," the observer of nature may daily watch the endless 'varieties of effect.' 'He was by this time fully aware,' remarks Mr. Leslie, 'of the obstacles that existed to a just estimation of his art, and he drew up a preface to his work, in 'which the following passage seems to me to be a true statement of the case between the public and himself:—"In Art "'there are two modes by which men aim at distinction. In "'the one, by a careful application to what others have accomplished, the artist imitates their works, or selects and combines their various beauties; in the other he seeks excellence "'at its primitive source—Nature. In the first he forms a

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\* 'It is perhaps unnecessary to remark, that we associate the idea of warmth with red, orange, and yellow, because they are the colours of fire, and that in a summer landscape they can only have place in very small proportions, excepting at the rising and the setting of the sun, the coolest hours of the day.'

“ style upon the study of pictures, and produces either imitative or eclectic Art; in the second, by a close observation of Nature, he discovers qualities existing in her which have never been pourtrayed before, and thus forms a style which is original. The results of the one mode, as they repeat that with which the eye is already familiar, are soon recognized and estimated, while the advances of the artist in a new path must necessarily be slow, for few are able to judge of that which deviates from the usual course, or are qualified to appreciate original studies.” The principle of this distinction applies to all artists: to the poet as much as to the painter.

It is worthy of observation, that, whilst Constable was so little known in his own country, some Frenchmen purchased two of his pictures which were exhibited at the Louvre and elsewhere, and attracted considerable notice. There is little more to add as regards his life. On the death of his wife's father, he attained what may be termed affluence; but this in nowise diminished his attachment to his art, or his ardour in the pursuit of it. His first great misfortune was the loss of his wife, whom he so tenderly loved: his distress and desolation on this great bereavement are feelingly described by Mr. Leslie. His constitution proved to be undermined to a degree which neither he nor his friends were aware of: and, his disorders being aggravated by sedentary habits, he died suddenly in 1837 of a spasmodic attack. Besides his pictures, he contributed to Art the work on English Landscape, which we have just mentioned: And some very valuable notes of the Lectures on Landscape Painting, which he had delivered at Hampstead and the Royal Institution, are added to the present memoir. They will startle the collectors of Wouverinans', Boths, and Berghems. Those of our readers who may not have seen his works, or may not sufficiently recollect his peculiar style, will find one of his best pictures in the National Gallery. A few admirers subscribed to place it there.

It is a curious fact, that both Constable and Turner (two of our most eminent landscape painters) have persevered, each according to his own views, in a style, in which—if the public are allowed a voice—there must be something seriously wrong; since both have failed to please generally, although, among those best acquainted with Art, each has his ardent and devoted admirers. At the head of Turner's admirers, is Mr. Ruskin: whose eloquent book on modern painters must be allowed, however fanciful, to be one of the most remarkable works on Art which has appeared in our time: while, among the admirers of Constable, Mr. Leslie occupies the foremost place. Indeed,

some, consider that Mr. Leslie has given the most flattering proof of his sincerity, by following in a great measure Constable's principle of colour; though he would deny this himself, and allege that all he had done had been to paint as like nature as he was able.

Without attempting an entire solution of the difficult question, whether it be the public or the artists who are in the wrong, it is interesting to approach the subject by way of compromise, and endeavour to ascertain whether, in fact, there may not be grounds both for the admiration of those who admire, and for the censure of those who find fault.

In nature we are excited by objects of beauty, either of form or of colour, by the grand, the pathetic, and the terrible. This may be admitted, without entering into the discussion of what is beauty, or what the origin of the sublime; and perhaps the best description of the province of the fine arts is to reproduce these feelings by Art. The painter does this by representation of form and colour, the sculptor by form alone, the poet by words, and the musician by sounds. Each department has its province; and each has advantages of its own. The painter and the sculptor, though their representation must be confined to one moment of time, have an advantage over the poet or the musician in the visible embodiment of beauty, by the means of either colour or form. Then comes the question, how far the representation is to be entirely true to nature; whether, in fact, 'Art is to be actual imitation?' But, though we state this to be a question, every body, we presume, allows that the province of Art is something more than a mere imitation of the object, the recollection of which is to be raised in the mind. To confine ourselves at present to painting and sculpture—while the artist must be so thoroughly acquainted with the form and nature of the object to be represented, as truly to bring the image before the mind of the spectator, yet it is not his object actually to deceive: And, though it may appear paradoxical, as often as this is attempted to be done, Art is always least successful, for its deficiencies are made at once apparent. A coloured wax figure, with glass eyes and real hair, approaches in form and colour nearer to nature than any picture or statue can pretend to do: but it is nevertheless always offensive, and the mind is convinced at once of the imperfection of the copy, far more than is the case in a portrait or bust.

This being admitted, it is possible that in some qualities of their pictures, both Turner and Constable may have erred in being too real, and in aiming at that which was at once beyond the reach and the object of their art; and that they have

failed to please, for the very same reason (though without our being equally aware of it) that the wax figure is felt to be false. Turner attempts, in nearly all his works, to represent the full light of day. Now, this only can be done by nearly pure white, as the representation of sun-light: in which case, if a gradation of tint is to be preserved, the scale must be ascended through all the intermediate stages of colour, where consequently the white and the lighter yellows become predominant. Constable makes nearly the same attempt, but by other means. Instead of the lighter conventional yellows of Turner, he strives at representing the pure green of nature: without, however, that subtle attention to gradation and harmony of colour so marvellous in the works of Turner. May it not therefore follow, that in each case, from attempting too much, the picture has, in respect of certain qualities, become too directly real, and has accordingly receded farther from the true province of Art? It might clear the way for a decision, were we all agreed, in what particulars their representation of nature is common to all successful artists; and agreed, accordingly, on the distinctive points, one or more, at which their individual peculiarities begin. The further questions would then arise — Have these peculiarities that character of imitation which is a vice in Art? and is it to this too palpable, and therefore too evidently defective, imitation, that the degree of failure, which we are seeking to account for, can be ultimately traced?

Although Art is inconsistent with mere imitation, yet of course without an accurate representation of the character of the thing intended to be portrayed, there can be no good Art. It is not in the drawing, nor in the representation of the character or form of the objects, be they trees, buildings, mountains, or clouds, that the error (if error there be) in either Turner's or Constable's pictures is to be sought. Neither is it in the colours of objects, when, as with Turner, the colours chosen are not purposely conventional. But to proceed with the case of Turner first — never, perhaps, were there before such perfect specimens of harmonious \* colouring: never was the one colour

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\* Harmony, it will be observed, is the one colour opposed by its opposite or complementary colour. The diagrams of the chromatic scale contained in treatises on colour intended to exhibit the contrasts produced by the action and reaction on the retina, have one common defect, inasmuch as the opposite colours are represented by equal intensity, whereas the complementary colour pictured on the retina is always less vivid, and always darker or lighter than the original colours. This variety undoubtedly accords more with harmonious effect in painting; the opposition of two pure colours of equal inten-

so completely balanced by its opposite, as in his drawings. Neither can there be more perfect specimens of *chiaroscuro*\*: no painter ever managed this part of the art with more magical power. We fully agree with Mr. Ruskin's summing up on this point. 'The simplicity and inexhaustible variety of Nature's own *chiaroscuro* in open cloudless daylight, giving the expanse of harmonious light, and the speaking decisive shadow, and the exquisite grace, tenderness, and grandeur of aerial opposition of local colour and equally illuminated lines: no *chiaroscuro* is so difficult as this, and none so noble, chaste, and impressive.' The most absolute proof of the perfection of his *chiaroscuro* is the wonderful translation of Turner beyond all other painters, into light and shade alone, — witness almost every engraving from his works; and whilst hundreds are declaiming against his whites and his yellows, no one was ever found who did not admire a print from his paintings. Thus far Turner's process is common to himself and other landscape painters. The difference is only in his superiority. If his *chiaroscuro* and his forms are almost universally right, where is the defect almost as universal, if some defect or other must be admitted? What, if the answer should be to be found in Mr. Ruskin's own book? We apprehend, that the defect in question is to be sought for in the *tone*. An exact representation of the brilliancy of light cannot be attained: but the nearest approach to it will be pure white. It is in the ambition of realising the unattainable brightness of nature by large quantities of white, or very light colour, that the origin of what we venture to think Turner's *chiaroscuro* appears to us to consist. As Mr. Ruskin observes, 'there are here and there passages in Turner's Academy pictures, in which he has translated the unattainable intensity of one tone of colour into the attainable pitch of a higher one; the golden green, for instance, of intense sunshine into pure yellow, because he knows it is impossible with any mixture of blue whatever to give faithfully its relative intensity of light; and Turner will always have his light and shade right, whatever it costs him in colour.'

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sity, differing only in their abstract quantity, would be pronounced crude and inharmonious. It would not be correct to say such a contrast is too violent; on the contrary, it is not carried far enough. The contrast, to be perfect, must be a contrast in brightness or darkness, as well as in mere hue. See Mr. Eastlake's note to the translation of Goethe on Colours, page 358.

\* *Chiaroscuro* means the mutual relation of bright and obscure masses; it is, therefore, not treated as light and shade, but comprehends also light and dark colours.

Now, what is *tone*? We will take Mr. Ruskin's definition of it:—‘I understand two things by the word *tone*: first, the exact relief and relation of objects against and to each other in substance and darkness, as they are nearer or more distant, and the perfect relation of the shades of all of them to the chief light of the picture, whether that be sky, water, or anything else; secondly, the exact relation of the colours of the shadows to the colours of the light, so that they may at once be felt to be merely different degrees of the same light; and the accurate relation among the illuminated parts themselves, with respect to the degree in which they are influenced by the colour of the light itself, whether warm or cold; so that the whole of the picture may be felt to be in one climate, under one kind of light, and “in one kind of atmosphere,”’ &c.

‘The finely toned pictures of the old masters are remarkable for the truth of their proportionate differences, and though the key-note be far below nature, they are remarkable for the correctness in this respect—the finely toned pictures of the old masters being two or three octaves below the key of nature, but the dark objects in the middle distance having precisely the same relation to the light of the sky which they have in nature, but the light being necessarily infinitely lowered, and the mass of the shadow deepened in the same degree.

‘Now Turner starts from the beginning with a totally different principle; he boldly takes pure white (and justly, for this is the *sign* of the most intense sunbeams) for his highest light, and lampblack for his deepest shade; and between these he makes every degree of shade indicative of a separate degree of distance, giving each step of approach,—not the exact difference in pitch which it would have in nature, but a difference bearing the same proportion to that which his sum of possible shade bears to the sum of nature's shade, so that an object half way between his horizon and his foreground, will be exactly in half tint of force, and every minute division of intermediate space will have just its proportionate share of the lesser sum and no more. Hence, where the old masters expressed one distance, he expresses a hundred; and where they said furlongs, he says leagues. Which of these modes of procedure be most agreeable with truth, I think I may safely leave the reader to decide for himself.’ ‘Observe,’ continues Mr. Ruskin, ‘I am not speaking of the beauty or desirableness of the system of the old masters. All I am concerned for the present is to show it is not true, but that Turner's is the closest and most studied approach to truth of which the materials of art admit.’ On the theory which we are throwing out, it is this very ap-



proximation, which, under certain circumstances, constitutes the danger.

Here then, having drawn the attention of our readers to the specific peculiarities of these two eminent artists, we leave the question between them and the public to be settled on its merits, without having the pretension of assuming further to determine it. In what we have stated, we have boldly referred to Turner: since Constable must, in this respect, to a certain extent, be put in the same category with him — though, in our opinion, he does not approach him within any ascertainable distance in respect of many of the qualities of a painter.\* The limited popularity of two artists of their eminence is a phenomenon which needs an explanation, and we have given one — one, however, which we can hardly expect will be generally received. On the contrary, in the case of Turner, we are prepared for an almost universal denial of Mr. Ruskin's assumption, that he has succeeded beyond his predecessors in imitating nature, or that his pictures are 'the closest and most studied approach to truth, of which the materials of Art admit.' Among his admirers, many, we believe, would attribute the opposition of the public to his injudicious selection of those subjects, or rather aspects, of nature, which are most difficult of imitation, if not entirely inimitable: or of such aspects as, if correctly imitated, cannot be known and felt to be correct, from their not being objects familiar to the beholder. Others would suggest, that the mistake might lie in the selection of those momentary effects, with which the eye of the general observer not only is unfamiliar, but which cannot be dwelt on with tranquil and continuous satisfaction. Indeed, we are ourselves inclined to ask — whether this diversity in their choice of subjects is not part of the secret of the preference, which most people give to the pictures of Claude? •

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\* The popular opinion entertained of Turner is derived from his pictures at the Exhibition; but nobody can hope to form a true estimate of the powers of this great artist without seeing his oil paintings in his own gallery, or those in the collection of Mr. Sheepshanks. After all, perhaps, his genius is shown to most advantage in his drawings: and, of these, through the liberality of Mr. W. P. Windus, the public may judge — whose fine collection at Tottenham is open every Monday. One of his pictures, part of the munificent donation of Mr. Vernon, is already placed in the National Gallery. We recommend any unlearned person, before he goes to look at it, to read over a notice of it in the February Number of the 'Arts' Union,' and observe the contrast drawn there between its representation of Nature, and that of the 'common-place reality' of the Canaletto and Vernet, near which it hangs.

If a low tone be not as true to nature, (looking at it as an imitation,) as a higher one, yet we are less reminded by it of its inadequate resemblance to the reality: while the scale, on which it is set, is more pleasing and less imperfect in its relations and proportions. The point is fairly raised in the extract, which we gave a short way back, describing the conflicting opinions of Sir George Beaumont and Constable. Constable was all for the green of the grass plat: Sir George for the brown of the Cremona fiddle. Now, we have seen that harmony and gradation cannot be attained, as regards the greens in nature, when the masses are large. Turner evades the difficulty by sacrificing local colour and substituting light yellow. The old masters—Titian, Domenichino, Giorgione—had evaded it by adopting a conventional brown, and a lower tone: On their system Sir George Beaumont's brown tree in the corner would evidently be justified. Browns and the mellow tints of autumn were more manageable, and more fitted for the difficulties and conventions of pictorial representation, than the silver and green of Constable: Or, if a representation of the latter must be ventured upon, the practice of Ruysdael, Hobbima, &c., in adopting a lower scale of tone, might still be right: since, by its means, a too direct imitation of nature was avoided. However, conventionalisms of all kinds are so easily established and abused, that we feel always grateful to men of original genius and independent spirit, who dare to question them. Nor the less so, because they are well aware, that they fight out the experiment, with a halter round their necks. They are rebels against the powers that be, and can only hope to be justified by complete success. Until they have succeeded, the world goes with the party in possession. For example, in the present case, low-toned pictures are in possession. They are generally admired, whilst the others are usually condemned at first-sight. At the same time, we must admit that nobody can reasonably call this preference the cant of criticism. For, in this instance, the uneducated are following their own taste much more than the reading of the critics. And although the uneducated in the province of Art may not be fit judges, yet it is, on the other hand, surely fair to infer that a painter, who succeeds only in pleasing one in a thousand among persons taking pleasure in the fine arts, cannot be thought to have attained his highest aim, however natural he may suppose, or even prove his style; and although it may have as much of Art in it, and of *la difficulté surmontée* as any other. Our taste in pictures has not been formed after the fashion of George I. in oysters; who, having lived in an inland country,

could find no flavour in English oysters, because they were fresh.

The pleasing effect of a low tone in pictures is an admitted fact, and the reason which we have assigned for this, is at least a plausible one. Meanwhile, it is clear, that much of the mellowness in the pictures of the old masters is necessarily the effect of time; though—whether they foresaw old Time at work, in the spirit of Addison's graceful allegory, and made allowance accordingly for his future touches—or whether the merit, if it be one, is accidental, cannot now be ascertained. The hand of Time, it must be, besides, acknowledged has not been equally favourable to all. Many works of the greatest masters have lost so much of their original beauty, that the experienced eye of the connoisseur can alone appreciate them. Those who have admiration ready for every old picture with a great name to it, would do well to remember what Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed in his second Discourse: 'Old pictures, deservedly celebrated for their colouring, are often so changed by dirt and varnish, that we ought not to wonder if they do not appear equal to their reputation in the eyes of inexperienced painters or young students. An artist, whose judgment is matured by long observation, considers rather what the picture once was, than what it is at present. He has by habit acquired a power of seeing the brilliancy of tints through the cloud by which it is obscured. An exact imitation, therefore, of those pictures, is likely to fill the student's mind with false opinions; and to send him back a colourist of his own formation, with ideas equally remote from nature and from art, from the genuine practice of the masters, and the real appearances of things.'

On the other hand, what the works of two great painters looked like, on coming fresh from the easel, may be seen in Northcote's life of Reynolds. 'When Richardson was a very young man, in the course of his practice he painted the portrait of a very old lady, who, in conversation at the time of her sitting to him, happened to mention, that when she was a girl about sixteen years of age, she sat to Vandyke for her portrait. This immediately raised the curiosity of Richardson, who asked a hundred questions, many of them unimportant; however, the circumstance which seemed to him, as a painter, to be of the most consequence in the information he gained was this; she said, she well remembered, that at the time when she sat to Vandyke for her portrait, and saw his pictures in his gallery, they appeared to have a white and raw look, in comparison with the mellow and rich hue which we now see in them, and which time alone must have given to them, *adding much to their*

*excellence.* Of the truth of this anecdote I am well convinced from my own experience, as before I came to London, I had seen no others of Sir Joshua's paintings than those which had been mellowed by a considerable space of time, which had given them a richness of hue; so that when I first saw his gallery in London, I well recollect my surprise and disappointment at the sight of the raw, crude, fresh appearance of his new pictures, which, from these causes alone, seemed to me by no means equal to those I had before seen and so much admired.' This is good news for our contemporaries. It is probable, however, that some of the pictures in Sir Joshua's gallery, his disappointment at which Northcote has recorded, were unfinished pictures prepared for glazing.

There is no risk, we hope, of our observations being supposed to be intended for a review of Mr. Ruskin's work. It is far too original and too ingenious, to be dismissed with a passing remark. We have referred to it merely for the purpose of availing ourselves of those discriminating criticisms in it, which appeared to us illustrative of our subject, and because we found them there, better expressed by Mr. Ruskin than we could have expressed them for ourselves.

ART. VIII.—*Histoire des Races Maudites de la France et de l'Espagne.* Par FR. MICHEL. 2 tom. 8vo. Paris, 1847.

THE mediæval writers on politics divided society into three classes,—those who worked, those who fought, and those who prayed; or, in other words, the man who produced the necessaries of life, the soldier who defended him in his industry, and the priest who assisted him by prayers for his success. This was, however, a very imperfect and inaccurate picture of the social relations of that long confused period which we are in the habit of designating as the Middle Ages, when the necessity of individual self-protection, social prejudices and enmities, intermixture of different races, and other causes, produced an endless variety of subdivisions of classes and castes, that have disappeared with the extinction of feudal institutions, and are now only remembered in a few local prejudices or customs. To understand the Middle Ages, it is very necessary that we should know these various accidents and peculiarities of society, for on them depends often the particular character of many great public events which we have at first sight a difficulty in explaining.

With the natural subdivisions of these three principal classes

we are tolerably well acquainted, because they frequently make their appearance in history, and have been the objects of multitudes of legal documents. But there were, besides these, distinct classes which had been gradually formed of the refuse of the others, composed of those who, having relinquished or been forced out of the position which the law acknowledged, had gradually formed themselves into a separate caste which lived upon society, and which, though virtually not acknowledged or protected by the law, still filled an important place in the great social scheme; while there were others again who, not only disowned by the law, but hated and avoided by their fellow men, lived like the Parias of the East, apart from and deprived of direct intercourse with the rest of mankind. The history of this latter class is almost unknown; in many countries all traces of its existence have disappeared, for no class of medieval writers have condescended to speak of it. It is the same with the Indian Parias, concerning whom it would be useless to think of seeking for much information in native writers; but we have it in our power to examine into the state and character of the castes of the Hindoos as they still exist unimpaired and on the spot:—whereas unfortunately no one attempted to trace the history of the Parias of the West, until the few, who are left, have been in general admitted to social rights, and have lost many of their most interesting features. Before the recent appearance of the two volumes which form the subject of our present remarks, it was hardly suspected that this new link of comparison between medieval Europe and ancient or medieval India had ever existed.

The wild districts in the west and south-west of France, extending from Brittany and Maine, through Poitou, Guienne, Gascony, Bearn, and the Basque provinces to Navarre, and some of the neighbouring districts of Spain on the other side of the Pyrenees, have been little explored, and in many parts the population presents a very primitive physiognomy. The class of which we are now speaking, is scattered over this extensive tract of country, and has been known from time immemorial by the name of Cagots, Capots, Agots, or Gahets, or by the still more singular and general one of *Chrestiaa* (Christian), although the latter appears to have become nearly obsolete. Almost every village possesses a family or two of Cagots: at least evidence of their former existence is found in the name still retained by the locality they inhabited, or the places they frequented; and in some parts, especially in Spanish Navarre, which M. Michel supposes to have been their head quarters, they are still numerous. Their residence was, in fact, almost always confined to a particular street or quarter of the town;

and in country villages they generally occupied a separate hamlet, which in many instances is divided from the other habitations by a river. Such is the case at Lurbe, in the arrondissement of Oloron, where the Cagots formed a numerous portion of the population, and where a bridge was the only communication between them and the rest of the inhabitants. In many cases where the Cagot families had become extinct at a comparatively distant period, their houses appear to have been destroyed, and the name of *lous Capots* or *lous Chrestias*, is now often found attached to unoccupied sites, while in other instances their residences have been consigned to some degraded purpose. At Mont de Marsan the quarter of the Cagots (there named Gezits) is now inhabited entirely by people of ill fame, and by prostitutes. In the departments of the Upper and Lower Pyrenees, where this caste appears to have been very numerous, we scarcely meet with a little town or village to which there is not attached a separate group of houses known as 'The Capots,' besides a number of small hamlets bearing the same name, which are situated in remote districts far from other habitations. The street of the Cagots or Capots also occurs frequently in the towns of the various departments which they inhabited.

It is in the churches, however, that we find the most numerous and lasting proofs of the existence of the Cagots, as well as of the abhorrence in which they were held by the rest of the population. In some places they seem to have had at a remote period churches or chapels of their own — at least, the ruins or traces of small ecclesiastical buildings are found, which popular tradition ascribes to them. In most of the churches of the west and south-west of France, there is a small entrance door (now often walled up) called the Cagots' door, quite distinct from the principal entrance: there is also a division of the church at some distance from the portion of the church occupied by the congregation, which is understood to have been set apart for the Cagots, and a small holy-water basin for their separate use, the latter generally bearing traces of ancient sculpture. The street of the Cagots, a narrow dirty lane, generally led to the little door of the church. The Cagots, who were looked upon, even by the church, as an accursed race, were expressly forbidden to enter by the same door as the rest of the congregation, or to introduce themselves into any other part of the church than that set aside for them, or to approach the larger holy-water basin. In many places, as at Luccarré, in the arrondissement of Pau, and at Claracq, in the canton of Thèze (in the department of the Pyrenees), where the Cagots were admitted to

partake in the Holy Sacrament, they were still kept apart from other people, and the consecrated bread was reached to them at the end of a rod or cleft stick. No one but a Cagot would enter the church by the Cagots' door, or even pass along the street they inhabited. At Ossun, in the department of the Hautes Pyrénées, so late as the year 1789, a Cagot having ventured to dip his hand into the larger holy-water basin, narrowly escaped becoming a victim to popular fury; and it is recorded, that in the department of the Landes of Bordeaux, at the beginning of the reign of Louis XVI., a rich Cagot of that country (for they were not always poor) having been observed to use the water from the holy-water basin of the inhabitants of the place at three different times, an old soldier went with his sabre to watch one Sunday at the church door, and, as the Cagot was again preparing to violate the law by which his whole race was proscribed, the soldier cut off his hand, which was immediately picked up and nailed to the church door as a warning to prevent future offences of the same description. On the other hand, an old woman of Serre Castet, in the canton of Morlaas (Hautes Pyrénées) informed M. Michel that she remembered having when a child been frequently beaten by her mother for putting her hand into the holy-water basin of the Cagots. It is still related at Larroque, in the same department, as an atrocious act of revenge against the curé, that a man once introduced gravel into the lock of the curé's door, so that he was obliged to pass into the church through the door of the Cagots. At Argelos, where this door happens not to have been (as is so often the case) walled up, the aversion to the Cagots continues so strong among the inhabitants, that rather than pass through it, they make a circuit of above twenty yards, and descend into the churchyard by a short ladder, although the 'way of the Cagots' is at the same time more direct, and on a level with the churchyard. At Lurbe, where, as we have said, the Cagots were numerous, it was not easy to keep them separate from the rest of the congregation, to the great annoyance of the curé, who took every opportunity of showing openly his contempt for them. One of the inhabitants, still alive at a very advanced age, remembers that on one occasion, just before the breaking out of (what we have been accustomed to call) the great Revolution, a Cagot woman having accidentally passed the boundary in the church within which they were restrained, the curé burst into a rage in the middle of the service, and shouted out, '*Votre place n'est pas là, Cagote! et sachez que moi, que je sois devant ou derrière vous, je suis toujours votre curé; mais vous autres, que vous*

'soyez devant ou derrière, vous ne serez jamais que de vilains Cagots!'

The prejudice against the Cagots was not confined to the interior of the church: for in almost every parish there was a separate cemetery for them, or at least a place set apart for them in the cemetery belonging to the church;—no person who was not a Cagot would on any account be interred near them. Nor were they even permitted to draw water at the same well as other people; and there is in most of the villages they inhabited a well still known as the Cagots' well (*la houn deus Cagots, houn deu Chrestiaa, &c.*).

This deep-rooted feeling of aversion to what was looked upon by every one as an accursed race, was carried into all the relations of life. Men or women who had been induced to contract marriage with Cagots, were considered to have thereby forfeited their caste, and were deserted even by their nearest relations. In many places the prejudice against intermarriage with Cagots continues to exist at the present day. A recent example occurred at Hennebon, in Lower Brittany, where a baker, having married a woman reputed of Cagot race, lost immediately all his custom among the lower orders of people. A respectable family at Agnos, in the arrondissement of Oloron, has been no less than six times on the point of concluding a marriage for their eldest son (now forty years of age), but it was always broken off on its being discovered that the ancestors of the family of the bridegroom were Cagots. And at Mifaget, in the same district, a rich and very respectable family of peasants has been equally unable to find a match for their daughter, merely on account of their being known to be of Cagot blood. In 1841, a girl of Cheust, in the valley of Argelès (Hautes Pyrénées) was on the point of marrying a Cagot of the neighbourhood; the match was in every respect a most advantageous one, and had the entire approval of the father and mother of the girl, but the grandmother, in whom the old prejudices remained undiminished, insisted upon it being broken off. Another family, richer, but less scrupulous in this respect, married their daughter to the Cagot.

It is remarkable that the Cagots in general bore the tyrannical contempt to which they were exposed with resignation, although they were often more wealthy, and in other respects superior, to their neighbours who laid claim to purer blood. In their popular ballads they spoke of their condition in jest, and without bitterness; and in a few instances where the attempt has been made to rescue the Cagot population from an intolerant neighbourhood, by removing them to a distant part of the coun-



try, they always showed an eager desire to return to their native place. They did not, however, always submit quietly to persecution: for both local traditions and popular songs speak of serious conflicts between individuals of the two races, and of riots that have arisen out of them. Events like these, and anecdotes of the former hostile feeling between the Cagots and the inhabitants of pure blood, still form in some villages the ordinary conversation of old people. We find them sometimes purchasing exemption from their persecutors. At Pardies (Bearn) a Cagot, in 1725, paid thirty livres and a 'drinking-bout' (*buvette*) to the commune, for permission to enter the sanctuary and sing with the others in the church. In general, the Cagots were denied all communion with their fellow men: so much so, that they were not allowed to contribute to local taxation. And when, at Momas (Basses Pyrenées), a tax called *rancule* was levied on all the Cagots of the commune, to mark the contempt in which they were held, the collector was accompanied with a dog, to which each Cagot was obliged to give a piece of bread.

The Cagots differed, at least for the century and a half during which we have had any direct information respecting them, from the Pariahs of the East in their moral character, which has been in every respect as correct as that of the population which surrounded them. Here and there, indeed, M. Michel collected vague imputations which appear to be totally unsubstantiated by facts: they are charged, for instance, with cunning and faithlessness—vices which are almost always attached to races that have been reduced to a state of degradation—as well as with sensuality. In former days they were sometimes treated as heretics, in spite of their regular attendance at church; and they were also popularly looked upon as sorcerers, which was perhaps the reason that their residences were so often separated from those of their neighbours by a stream of water. Such was the case at Cadillac-sur-Garonne (Gironde), where the road by which they entered the town was known popularly as the *chemin-du-diable*. They were probably the cause of the evil reputation which the Basque provinces enjoyed in this respect during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the district of Mauléon, the peasantry, till recently, looked upon the Cagots with the greatest terror, in the belief that they bewitched their cattle; and in various other parts, especially in Brittany, they are believed to possess the power of the evil eye, and mothers carefully hide their infants from the Cagot's gaze. This superstitious feeling, probably, led to another accusation, brought against them in some parts during the last century, that of holding secret meetings for purposes that were never divulged. It is further

stated—though this must, doubtless, be looked upon as a mere prejudice, connected perhaps with the charge of sorcery—that most of the persons of pure blood united to Cagots fall ill soon after their marriage, and that many of them die, while those who recover possess thenceforward a much stronger constitution than before. M. Michel repeats on the authority of a correspondent, that there are instances of Cagot women who, in a very short space of time, had sent to the grave three husbands not Cagots, although they had been all young and healthy; and he adds, that there were instances of Cagot men who had as rapidly despatched their three wives who had the misfortune to be of a different race.

The author of the volumes before us, appears to be too credulous respecting information of this kind; and the notices he has collected of the physical character of the Cagot ~~came~~ are too confused and imperfect to be of much use. This is to be attributed partly to the difficulty of obtaining ~~any~~ thing more than vague traditions on the subject; now, that the old prejudices against this unfortunate race have been so generally broken down, and any physical peculiarities, which they might have possessed, are worn out by the intermixture of blood. All authorities seem, however, to agree, that the Cagots were universally distinguished by the absence of the lobe of the ear; in consequence, in many parts of the country it is still a common practice to apply to a Cagot, as an opprobrious epithet, the name of *short-ears* (*courtes-oreilles*). According to different informants, they were distinguished also by whiteness of skin, by the largeness of the head, by the habitual recurrence of particular diseases—these being evidently only the accidental consequences of the localities they inhabit—and lastly, they were accused of being lepers. There never existed, as far as we can trace, any ground for this latter imputation, which probably arose from the circumstance that a Cagot and a leper were formerly placed under the same ban of society. It is, indeed, extremely probable that, in speaking of lepers, and of the class now known by this general title of Cagots, the old writers, in many instances, mistook the one for the other.

M. Michel has also left us in some uncertainty on another important circumstance connected with his subject. We should like to know, whether any peculiarities of language can now be traced among the Cagots, such as might tend to prove, what all other facts lead us to infer, that they are of an entirely different race from the people among whom they are so singularly located. The occupations in which the Cagots have engaged are

not numerous. In some parts we find them employed as smiths, masons, weavers, and, occasionally, carrying on one or two other businesses. As weavers, they worked in general for distant customers; since, the people of the neighbourhood, knowing their origin, would give them no employment, for fear their cloth should be *encagotté*, a term which seems to have been understood as implying that they would be bewitched. The Cagots were the chimney-sweeps of Pau. In the Basque provinces they often exercised the craft of minstrels, the profession generally, during the middle ages, of a degraded class. But, with these few, and not very frequent exceptions, the universal occupation of the Cagots, in all parts of the country, was that of carpenter, a fact so well known, that in many parts the term carpenter was considered synonymous with Cagot; it has given rise to a popular tradition, still preserved in two or three places, (and which would make Jews of them for the purposes at least of hatred), that their caste was descended from the carpenter who made the cross on which our Saviour was crucified. With the little historical knowledge we at present possess relating to them, it would be in vain to pretend to propose a theory of origin which would be much better, whatever we may think of this. Some writers make them descendants of the Goths, who were reduced to a state of dependency by the Frankish invaders; others have hazarded this and that conjecture; if we understand him well, M. Michel's opinion is, that they are a remnant of the Saracen invaders of the south of France, left behind after the defeat of their brethren by the Christians. We confess, that to us, all these theories seem equally open to objection; and their particular locality among the Basques and Bretons would lead us to suppose that their origin is much more remote.

Such are the Parias in a corner of Western Europe; as far as we can judge of them by local observation, and by the accounts of old people who have lived among them during the last century. That they have been attached to the same localities from a very early period we have sufficient evidence in a few old documents; which also lead us to believe that they were formerly much more numerous than at present, and that, however miserable may have been their condition in modern times, it was once far more deplorable. In a chartulary of the abbey of Luc, a Cagot is mentioned under the appellation of *Christianus*, in a document of the date of about 1000. There are some documents of the latter part of the thirteenth century, which speak of Gabets in the Bordelais. According to the customs of Bearn, compiled in 1303, a man suspected of a crime, against whom there was no direct evidence, was to justify himself by the assertion of

six freemen or of *thirty* Cagots. In 1378, the Cagots of Bearn made an agreement with Gaston Phebus, Count of Foix, by which they undertook to execute the carpentry work necessary for his castle of Montaner (a few leagues to the east of Pau), in exchange for which the count remitted to them for ever two francs of focage, which the Cagots (*Chrestians*) were in the habit of paying for each fire, and granted them exemption from all taxes which might be exacted from them in his dominions. This document proves that the Cagots were never serfs. In the customs of the town of Mas-d'Agenais (Lot et Garonne) committed to writing in 1388, we find the inhabitants strictly prohibited from buying food from the Cagots, or from employing them as labourers in their vintage. The municipal regulations of Marmande, in the same department, compiled in 1396, subject the Cagots to a heavy punishment, if they presumed to enter the town without a mark of red cloth, as a distinction, on their robe, or if they walked in the streets without a covering to their feet; when they met one of the townspeople they were to stand on one side of the road till he passed; they were allowed to purchase only on Mondays; they were forbidden to enter taverns or to buy wine, or to touch the vessels out of which people drank, or to take water out of the public well. From this date they are frequently mentioned as Cagots or *Chrestians* in the customs of different towns: they are proscribed in most of them no less rigorously than lepers and Jews, and are not unfrequently confounded with the former. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the Cagots or Agots of Navarre, addressed a complaint against the clergy of Navarre, for refusing to allow them to participate in the rites of the church; the refusal is stated to have been based on the accusation, that their ancestors had assisted Count Raimond of Toulouse in his revolt against the authority of Rome. The huissier of the conseil royal of Navarre, in opposing their demands went a little further back: for, he affirmed, that the Agots were the descendants of Gehazi, the wicked servant of the prophet Elisha, and as the prophet's curse was still hanging over them, he concluded them to be spiritually leprous and damned: he expressed the popular aversion then felt towards them, by declaring that the grass on which one of this accursed race trod was immediately dried up and lost its natural virtue; that apples and other fruits became rotten and corrupted the moment an Agot laid his hand upon them, and that their persons and their houses stank as though they were infected by some filthy disease. The Pope issued a bull in their favour, but the local authorities in many places persisted in these vexatious proceedings, notwithstanding;

the struggle for a participation in religious rites was carried on during several years, and broke out again at the end of the seventeenth century.

During the whole of the sixteenth century, the municipal bodies in the districts inhabited by Cagots, continued to pass severe laws against them, forbidding them, under any pretence, to mix with people of pure blood, to buy at their markets, to enter taverns or the shops of butchers and others, or to possess any kind of arms except the implements necessary for their ordinary occupation of carpenters. In Condom (Gers) and other towns it was ordered, that all meat seized at the butchers because it was corrupted or rotten, or because it came from beasts which had died of disease, or confiscated for any other similar cause, should be given to the Cagots.\* They were directed to bear on some conspicuous part of their persons a red mark in the form of a duck's foot; and their residences were ordered to be separate and at some distance from those of other people. In the earlier part of the seventeenth century, the inhabitants of Oloron complained, as of an intolerable grievance, that some Cagots of that place had presumed to keep pigeons, which, leaving their homes in search of food, mixed with the pigeons of their neighbours; and, at another place, a Cagot was punished for having been found fishing with a line in a river.

An attempt was made, early in the seventeenth century, by some members of the medical faculty, to destroy the prejudices against the Cagots. A commission, which was appointed to examine a certain number of individuals, reported that they were perfectly healthy, and free from all tendency to leprosy or to any other peculiar disease. It was not, however, till near the end of the century, that the local parliaments began to take up the cause of these unfortunate people, and by various judgments and *arrêts* seek to place them on a level with the rest of the population, and secure them the enjoyment of the same civil rights. The enforcing of these decrees, in many places, produced riots and litigation, and they were long executed only in a partial manner. The prejudice against the Cagots was too deeply rooted to be suddenly eradicated; but from this time intermarriages began to be more frequent, and, in some places, all traces of the original caste of the families, who had thus been admitted into society, became lost after a generation or two. M. Michel has given a number of curious reports of suits carried on during the last

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\* This would seem to indicate, at an early period, a resemblance in one respect to the Pariahs of India, who are said to prefer meat of this unwholesome description.

century between Cagots claiming civil rights and the municipalities which refused them, in which judgment was always given in favour of the former. A bishop of Tarbes, M. de Romaigne, an enlightened prelate, who died in 1768, went so far as to admit several individuals of Cagot origin to the priesthood: as, in the Brazils, there are now negro priests. This was the first instance of such liberality on the part of the clergy. Much repugnance, however, was still shown, both by the clergy and by the laity, to carrying out the new spirit of the law in this respect, until all distinction between the races in France was finally levelled in the convulsions of the revolution of 1792. The Cagots (*Agotes*) of Spain, less fortunate than their brethren in France, were not acknowledged by the law until 1817; and at a much later period their claims to exemption from their old disabilities have been obstinately disputed. In the August of 1840, Pedro Antonio Videgain, a Cagot of Bozate, and his wife, Catalina Josefa Zaldúa, were obliged to proceed against the inhabitants of Arizcun before the ecclesiastical tribunal of Pampluna, to obtain admission to a full and equal participation in the ceremonies of the church, which had been refused them on account of their caste. At the end of September 1842, judgment was given in favour of the Cagots. Their adversaries immediately appealed to the tribunal of the Bishop of Calahorra, when they were again defeated; and, on the 13th of March, 1843, the notaries of the latter court signified officially to the curé of Arizcun the final sentence, confirming the previous one, of the ecclesiastical court of Pampluna.

M. Michel's two curious volumes must be considered rather as a collection of facts and materials, than as a history; and he certainly deserves great praise for the zeal and industry he has employed in his researches. It appears that he visited some of the districts still inhabited by this singular race of people, both in France and Spain: and he established an extensive correspondence with persons capable of furnishing the necessary information in those districts in which he was unable to pursue his researches in person. In the first volume he has printed in full the opinions, generally hasty and injudicious ones, expressed by former writers on the origin of the Cagots, with a few other matters, which tend rather to embarrass than to enlighten the subject, and which, therefore, we think, might conveniently have been dispensed with; but he has made full amends by the publication of a mass of facts, gathered on the spot, relating to every town or village where the existence of Cagots can be traced. The remarkable coincidence in the information, gathered even in the most distant localities, tends strongly to

establish a unity of race in the Cagot population throughout the whole extent of country in which they have been traced. The second volume of the work before us consists almost entirely of documents, of which not the least curious are the popular ballads relating to the Cagots, or current among them, written in the different dialects known as Béarnais, Gascon, Basque, and Breton, also collected on the spot, and which he has accompanied with translations in modern French. They are not numerous, and some of them are mere fragments; but they consist of burlesques on Cagot marriages, several satirical pieces on the origin and position of the Cagots, and a few others breathing the hostile feeling between the two races, as it was fanned into a flame in the struggle for equality in the last century. We remark in our author a tendency to ascribe too great an antiquity to some of these pieces. In our opinion they were all composed subsequently to the interference of the parliaments to raise the Cagots to civil rights; and their original object appears to have been, as party songs, to keep up and perpetuate the old prejudices against them.

A question remains, on which future rescarches may probably throw some light—whether this caste was, in the middle ages, confined to the districts we have been describing, or whether it may have been spread through other parts of Europe. No distinct traces of such a caste have yet been noticed in England, although the names of several low classes of society, of the exact character of which we are ignorant, occur in early records. We have also an impression that in some of our older churches, small doors are met with, the exact use of which is not very well accounted for. Considering what we have been describing in France, it may, perhaps, be worth inquiring whether such doors may not have been made for the purpose of admitting persons of a despised class of society, who were not allowed to mix with the rest of the congregation. We have, unfortunately, hardly any municipal records of the period when we could hope for any information from them on this subject. M. Michel has pointed out a few isolated examples of proscribed classes in other parts of Europe, to which he has devoted the first chapters of his second volume. But in general they hardly seem to fall under the same category as the Cagots of France and Spain. A monastic writer of the eleventh century, Peter de Maillezais (*Petrus de Malleaco*), mentions, under the name of *Colliberts*\*, a race of people inhabiting in his time the marsh

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\* Quod a majoribus *Collibertorum* vocabulum contraxerat. The meaning of the word *Collibertus* is perfectly well known; and, besides

lands of Lower Poitou, which had been almost extirpated by the Normans, and which seems to have been closely analogous to our Cagots; this writer informs us that the Colliberts of his time offered a sort of superstitious worship to the rain, and that they gained their living by fishing.

So much for this humbled class; for an account of whom and of the nature of their proscription, we are indebted to M. Michel. They appear to be an historical puzzle, as the gypsies were once supposed to be — and most probably belong to some unfortunate historical antecedent. But all that we can now learn of them, is on too small and obscure a scale, to entitle them to any distinguished place in the gloomy annals of proscribed races. Those annals are a terrible testimony against humanity. For, among all the injuries done by man to man, none have been so fruitful of lasting evil, as the antipathy of castes in whatever form — whether representing the hateful distinctions of fanaticism and superstition, or the oppressive domination of a conqueror, or the vulgar insolence of mere diversity of race and colour.

ART. IX. — 1. *Life of William Allen, with Selections from his Correspondence.* 3 vols. 8vo. London, 1846–7.

2. *Memoir of the Life of Elizabeth Fry, with Extracts from her Journals and Letters.* Edited by two of her Daughters. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1847.

3. *Memoirs of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry; with a Biographical Sketch of her Brother J. J. Gurney, Esq.* By the REV. THOMAS TIMPSON. 12mo. London, 1847.

GEORGE FOX, the Founder of the Society of Friends, tells us, in his homely way, that his first interview with Oliver Cromwell, who was then Protector and lived at Whitehall, was interrupted by ‘people coming in.’ The Quaker patriarch drew back, and was about to retire. Oliver caught him by the hand, and, with tears in his eyes, said ‘Come again to my house; for if thou and I were but an hour of a day together, we

that it does not describe a class like the Cagots, or like those described by Peter de Maillezais, it has nothing to do with worshipping rain, or with fishing; from which, he informs us, different people derived the name of the people he describes. We may almost conjecture that an error of the scribes has introduced into the MS. a word with which their ears were familiar, in place of the true name of the fisher-caste of the Pictavian marshes.



‘should be nearer one to the other.’ The moral of this invitation applies to all of us. It is pleasant to think how much ‘an hour of ‘a day together’ would do towards bringing people nearer, however opposite their characters, provided only they agree in meaning well. The misfortune is, we do not give each other the opportunity; neither did Cromwell. His friends, the Independents, fixed upon Fox’s followers the scoffing term of Quakers, in ridicule of their tremblings under the power of God. In course of time Cromwell took up the same light tone towards Fox himself; with the addition of so much jealousy or alarm, that on Richard Cromwell’s deposition, 700 Quakers were found in prison for contempt—whom, under the declaration of Breda, Charles II. had the credit afterwards of setting free.

An hour a day, however, with the merry monarch, might not, probably, have answered long. In the honeymoon of his return, an order for granting them liberty of worship is said to have been issued, and to have only wanted signing, when the insurrection of the Fifth Monarchy men involved the Quakers and all other separatists, in a common persecution.

Within two years of the Restoration of the Stuarts, ‘more than 4200 of those called Quakers, men and women, are reported to be in prison in England:’ and Richard Hubberton, to whom the King at a singular and loving interview had promised on the word of a king, that the Friends should not suffer for their opinions, had himself died of a Newgate fever. James II. commenced his scheme for the Restoration of Popery under the cover of universal toleration. Of this specious benefit the Quakers would have been certain to have their share, were it only out of compliment to Penn. Their goods were no longer to be seized. A Quaker countryman was good-humouredly allowed to stand covered in the royal presence. But, the body at large were far too wise to be deceived by these appearances: Accordingly, Sewall, their historian, has justly postponed the date of their emancipation to the Revolution of 1688, and to the enlightened principles, which our great deliverer brought over with him. ‘This was a work reserved for that great prince King William, who, being born in a country where force upon conscience was abrogated, when a Protestant government was settled there, now also, according to his ability, introduced the like Christian liberty in England.’

George Fox had been brought up half shoemaker, half shepherd. Born in Italy, he would have founded an order, and been canonised into a saint. Born in England and in a religious age, he did nearly the same thing, when he founded the Society of Friends, and settled their tenets, meetings, ministries, and even

form of speech. The difference between Fox and Muggleton, whom Penn called 'the sorcerer of our days,' and to whom the scoffers delighted to compare him, may be judged of by the difference between Quakers and Muggletonians. In 1643, being then about nineteen years old, Fox went forth, 'at the command of God, over the North of England, leaving his relations, and breaking off all familiarity with young or old.' By the time he died, or 1690, his followers had become a people. Of these fifty years, he has left in his Journal, a remarkable memorial. Mackintosh calls it 'one of the most extraordinary and instructive narratives in the world.' It is, indeed, an instructive warning, how far extravagance and persecution may provoke and inflame each other, as well as an interesting picture of many foibles nobly redeemed by many and greater virtues. The prominent place occupied by biography, within the narrow pale of Quaker literature, is probably owing to the example of their founder. This is a great advantage, for all who wish to know them in the successive phases through which their community has passed. Since, every generation has had its biographical representative, with whom we may be 'an hour of a day together,' and find whether there are any, and what points, in which we are likely to be drawn nearer.

The persecution, under which the Quakers suffered for a season, was almost as fierce as that of the Jews in the Middle Ages. The spirit of Fox had been moved by it against Cromwell, even unto predicting his political downfall, in punishment of his apostacy from his great original Protectorate—that of the rights of conscience. † On the coming up of Monk, he broke out into a song of exultation and reproach: and, while recording the execution of the Regicides, he triumphantly declares that there was a secret hand in bringing this day upon that hypocritical generation of professors. As late as 1676, in 'a narrative of the spreading of the truth, and of the opposition from the powers which then were,' we find him still exclaiming:—

'Oh! the number of sufferers in the Commonwealth's, and Oliver Cromwell's days, and since; especially those who were haled before the courts for not paying tithes, refusing to swear on their juries, not putting off their hats, and for going to meeting on the first days (under pretence of breaking the Sabbath,) and to meetings on other days of the week; who were abused both in meetings, and on the highways. Oh! how great were the sufferings we then sustained upon these accounts! For sometimes they would drive Friends by droves into the prison-houses like penfolds, confine them on the first days, and take their horses from them; and keep them for pretended

breach of their Sabbath, though they would ride in their coaches, and upon their fat horses to the steeple-houses themselves, and yet punish others. And many Friends were turned out of their copyholds, and customary tenements, because in obedience to the command of Christ and his apostles, they could not swear; and as they went to meetings they have been stoned through the streets, and otherwise cruelly abused.'

The Universities were no better mannered than other places. Fox could scarcely make his way through Cambridge, he says, in 1655. Miners, colliers, and carters, could never be ruder than the scholars. They unhorsed Amos Stoddart; but Fox himself 'rode through them in the Lord's power. . . They knew 'I was so against the trade of preaching, which they were there 'as apprentices to learn, that they raged as bad as ever did 'Diana's craftsmen against Paul.'

On the other hand, (without counting counsels and imaginations as wild as those of James Nayler and others, whom they disowned,) the extravagances which they were proud of went lengths, from which it would seem that, for a time, oppression, falling on enthusiastic tempers, had driven them mad. Their doctrine of the inward light—to a certain extent so true—was abused into a scorn of human means, and of the proprieties and even decencies of life. 'As George Fox 'was walking in a field on a First Day morning, it was discovered to his understanding, that *to be bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to make a man to be a minister of Christ.*' So far we are quite agreed. The selfsame verity has been revealed to us also. But, why rush into the opposite extreme, and assume that human learning must extinguish Gospel light? In his old age, he wrote a paper, beginning with—*Righteous Abel was a shepherd*,—'to show by instances taken out of the Holy 'Scriptures, that many of the holy men and prophets of God 'and of the apostles of Christ, were husbandmen and tradesmen, 'by which people might see how unlike to them the world's 'teachers now are.' In one sense, they were in the right to be afraid of learning. Learning is not friendly to enthusiasm: and it was enthusiasm which at the setting out of Quakerism, had brought together its first disciples, 'young country lads, 'for the most part mean as to the outward, and very fit to 'be despised every where by the wisdom of man.' Their enthusiasm did not trouble itself 'to answer or satisfy the reasoning part of man.' Its power was manifested in passionate conviction, in quaking and trembling, in terrible possessions and transporting joys. Barclay, though bred a scholar, was of a nature to be subdued by it: 'being thereof in part a true wit-

'ness (he says): convinced not by strength of arguments, but, when I came into the silent assemblies of God's people, I felt a secret power among them, which touched my heart.'

The Quakers did well to prove from the beginning, by their perseverance, what mighty things perseverance even in passive resistance could accomplish: 'The governor of Dover Castle, when the king asked him if he had dispersed all the sectaries' meetings, said he had; but, the Quakers, the Devil himself could not; for if he did imprison them, and break up their meetings, they would meet again; and if he should beat them, or knock them down, or kill some of them, all was one, they would meet, and not resist, again.' But they did not do well to put on the authority of prophets, to take their imaginations for judgments, and make their appearance in prophetic dress or undress, within the steeple-houses of Episcopalians and Presbyterians to the terror and scandal of more formal worshippers. We had opened Fox's Journal for a few examples; and have closed it again, fearing, if we once began, we should not know where to stop.

We will only trust ourselves with a single extract. There is nothing more surprising in this strange diary than the quiet matter-of-fact air, with which the most extraordinary circumstances are related. The entry of the fire of London (1666) is sufficiently characteristic of the whole.

'The very next day after my release, the fire broke out in London, and the report of it came quickly down into the country. Then I saw the Lord God was true and just in his word, which he had showed me before in Lancaster gaol, when I saw the angel of the Lord with a glittering drawn sword southward. The people of London were forewarned of this fire: yet few laid it to heart or believed it; but rather grew more wicked, and higher in pride. A Friend was moved to come out of Huntingdonshire a little before the fire, and to scatter his money up and down the streets, turn his horse loose, untie the knees of his breeches, and let his stockings fall down, and to unbutton his doublet, and tell the people, "So should they run up and down, scattering their money and goods, half undressed, like mad people, as he was a sign to them;" which they did, when the city was burning. Thus hath the Lord exercised his prophets and servants by his power, showed them signs of his judgments, and sent them to forewarn the people: but, instead of repenting, they have beaten and cruelly entreated some, and some they have imprisoned, both in the former power's days, and since. But, the Lord is just, and happy are they that obey his word. Some have been moved to go naked in their streets, in the other power's days, and since, as signs of their nakedness; and have declared amongst them, that God would strip them of their hypocritical professions, and make them as bare naked as they were. But, instead of considering it, they have frequently whipped or otherwise abused them. . . . But oh! the body of dark-

ness that rose against the truth in them that made lies their refuge! But the Lord swept them away; and in and with his power, truth, life, and light, hedged his lambs about and preserved them as on eagles' wings.'

The abrogation of the penal laws against them effectually repressed this irregular enthusiasm. Permitted to assemble together after their own fashion, they no longer molested the public worship of other people; and when, in 1695, a Quaker affirmation was accepted in place of an oath, old Quakerism, that is, fanatical turbulent Quakerism, received its death wound. Since that time the genius of their community has gradually changed; not that we are willing to accept the invidious line of Pope—'the Quaker sly and Presbyterian sour'—as a more just description of the one persuasion than the other. But, externally their sect has in one particular remained the same, or nearly so: and in so doing has become more and more severed from the surrounding world. The plain dress, which originally was the general costume of simple people and had nothing in it of singularity, was soon left behind by ever changing fashion, until it has long become an outward badge, a bond and shackle upon a people who profess to be emancipated from all forms. In their adherence to a costume not merely plain but obsolete, Fox's successors have probably acted as their founder would not have done; for although he clothed himself 'from top to toe' in complete leather, and boasts how dreadful a thing it was to the professing priests to hear, 'the man in the leathern 'broccches is come,' yet he never insisted upon any of his converts following his example. The Lord had forbade him to put off his hat, or scrape with his leg or bow to any one, or to bid people *Good Evening* or *Good Morrow*, and had required of him to *Thou and Thee* every man without distinction: but there was no command concerning dress, nor even expressly concerning arms.\* However, if the Quaker has been going

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\* Quakers continued in Cromwell's army till 1654, when some of them were disbanded for refusing the oath of fidelity. Concerning others, in a letter to the Council of officers of the army in 1659, Fox complains, 'that many valiant captains and soldiers have been put out of the army (by sea and land) of whom it hath been said among you, that they had rather have had one of them, than seven men, and could have turned one of them to seven men, who, because of their faithfulness to the Lord God, it may be for saying *thou* to a particular and for wearing their hats, have been turned out from amongst you.' This was a year of 'much plotting by the several factions.' Fox saw no great difference between them: And, on being invited by the Committee of Safety to take up arms, it came

further from us in his outer man, we believe that in the inner man as well as in his general conduct, he has been certainly approaching nearer. This is true of all the internal changes which a century and a half have introduced into the society, and especially of the new direction which has been given to that manful energy which carried the infant sect through its first sharp struggle for existence. At the first, after the secular arm had been withdrawn, they wasted, for a space, 'a good deal of valuable time and temper in polemics. Prynne, Bunyan, Faldon, Charles Leslie, Bennet, and many less important combatants, entered the lists against them, and were met by Fillwood, reader to Milton in his blindness, and the original editor of *George Fox's Journal*; Penn of Pennsylvania; Whitehead, Fox's great coadjutor; Burroughs the Quaker Boanerges, and other doughty champions. The spirit of Rabshakeh too often presided over the contention. Uncouth outbreaks of vulgar fanaticism were hastily denounced as blasphemous. In one and the same breath they are described as the 'spawn of Romanish frogs,' as some ancient heresy sown among the ignorant and deluded mob by the accursed policy of the Jesuits; and, as being also Ranters under another name, as a monster growth of the Anabaptists and the Family of Love, as being 'no Christians,' nay 'worse than deists.' Bennet, although condescending to reply to their doctrines, still hankered, as late as 1705, after the old orthodox manner of refutation; and declared that all sober persons thought that many of the Quakers 'ought to be rather burnt than confuted.' Leslie could not comprehend, how the republication of *Fox's Journal* should be permitted. Meanwhile, Leslie himself was not content to take with them the short and easy method, which he supposed to be sufficient for Jews and Deists. In the late Oxford edition of his theological works, we see that out of seven volumes, no less than four are given up, however contumeliously, to Quaker controversy—on which, he has the gracelessness to say, he entered 'wholly for the love of souls.'

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upon him from the Lord (apparently for the first time) to warn his people against siding with either of the powers, who had both turned against the just, and whom, therefore, 'the just set one against another . . . lest any go out and fall with the uncircumcised.' As he could truly say 'that he had never learned any war postures' himself, he might feel justified in presenting to the king, only a few months afterwards, a renunciation of all wars and fightings on the part of the 'innocent, harmless people of God called Quakers,' and in declaring that such had been both their principle and practice from the beginning.

The sect profited greatly by these assaults. They were taught, in some degree, the value of human learning, and the theological tendencies of their own wild utterances. They no longer presumed to exclaim with Fox; 'All languages are to me no more than dust: who was before languages were.' Their unlettered champions had covered their cause with ridicule; but in Barclay's 'Apology,' they possess a calm, scholar-like defence of their peculiarities, which has ever been treated with respect. Leslie, as it suits his argument, supposes Penn and Barclay to have reformed and civilised the Quaker faith, until it made under their hands nearer advances to Christianity than it had ever made before; or asserts, as Wesley afterwards asserted in 1782, that they had merely pursued the course of advocates with a bad cause, refining some of the gross notions entertained at the beginning, and putting the most Christian gloss upon them, that they could. Into this question we need not enter. The Quakers profess to hold by their first apostles. This is true. But their ecstatic years are over: their age of signs and miracles: their period of insisting on the holy duty of quaking, or of prophesying\* naked in our streets: And, without examining strictly into the orthodoxy of this or that debated tenet, we are satisfied, that their advances towards Christianity are by this time generally allowed to be of the most substantial kind — manifesting a *power* of a higher order, than even that which touched the heart of Barclay.

Having escaped the perils of these unfriendly conflicts, the Quakers wisely set themselves to prove that they were Christians (for that had been the gist of the dispute), by the more generous competition of Christian life and Christian charity. Justly as the conduct of Penn, during the reign of James II., exposed him to suspicion, both within and beyond the Quaker pale, he exhibited in his dominions on the western continent a model of benevolent government founded upon the principles of his sect; and in the same spirit of adherence to the duties imposed by the self-designation of Friends, and of conformity with the spirit of their founder, they have ever since devoted themselves to the support, and in some instances even to the working out, of great measures of practical philanthropy.

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\* Fox's Journal, 386. (A.D. 1666). Leslie's Theological Works, iv. 314. 'There is not a year, hardly a month, wherein some Quaker or other is not going about our streets, here in London, either naked, or in some exotic figure, denouncing woes, judgments, plagues, fire, sword, and famine.' (*The Snake in the Grass*, A.D. 1696: See v. 40. a catalogue of these nudities.)

With affectionate zeal for the honour of their founder, the Quakers have diligently culled from his writings passages which indicate that he had some forethought of their benevolent course. They place him before us, as 'suffering in spirit' on account of the sanguinary character of our penal code, and appealing to persons in authority against the outrage of 'putting to death for small matters.' Urged on by the observations forced upon him during his hard experience, he proclaimed what a hurtful thing it was for prisoners to be long in gaol, and how they learned wickedness one of another. He promoted the establishment of schools for the teaching of 'whatsoever was civil and useful in the creation.' He wrote to Friends throughout the nation, about putting out poor children to trades. He protested manfully and humanely against the wickedness of the Cornish wreckers. Above all things he charged the holders of negroes to train them up in the fear of God, to deal mildly and gently with them, and after certain years of servitude to set them free. It is in the spirit of these benevolent injunctions, that modern Quakers have generally been found to walk; and, in reference to the last of them, it is universally known, how distinguished has been their course. As early as 1727 the yearly meeting of Quakers in London solemnly condemned the importation of negroes. Within a few years afterwards, John Woolman, an American Quaker, published those treatises against negro slavery which captivated the gentle Elia. In due time followed Anthony Benezet, more active and more zealous than Woolman, but not more wise; And the same cause never afterwards lacked Quaker advocacy or Quaker support, in every way in which either of them could be applied. We cannot attempt to follow the stream of Quaker benevolence during the eighteenth century. Much of it was medical, witness Fothergill and Lettson. In one department, that of education, they were soon ahead. We do not mean learning in its higher branches—the Society of Friends can boast of few philosophers, and fewer poets—but a simple, drab-coloured, working education, within the reach of all. 'It would be difficult to find one Quaker,' (we quote from the Independent Whig of 1720,) 'that cannot read, unless he has been educated and bred up in the Church, and become a convert to Quakerism. Whereas, I will venture to affirm that half the common people of the church, especially in the country, cannot read a word.' Ackworth and other educational establishments are evidence of their zeal for the instruction of youth. The century closed with the erection of the Retreat at York, in which the Quakers were the first persons in England to adopt a rational treatment of



the insane. The two biographies, now before us, will enable us to follow the track of their benevolence up to the present time.

William Allen and Elizabeth Fry ran a considerable portion of their earthly career, together. Both were descended from old Quaker families. The former, born in 1770, was the eldest son of an undistinguished silk manufacturer in Spitalfields; the latter, born ten years later, was the third daughter of John Gurney, of Earlham in Norfolk, a younger son of an ancient house. The Gurneys had been Quakers for four generations; and on her mother's side she was descended from Barclay of Ury, the author of 'The Apology.'

Descents so different and residences far asunder kept William Allen and Elizabeth Fry apart during their early years. From his youth he was remarkable for his activity, and for a fondness for scientific inquiries, principally those connected with chemistry and astronomy. At the age of fourteen, he constructed a telescope for himself, through which he could make observations upon the satellites of Jupiter. His parents were plain, serious people, who made religion attractive to him; and in long after years, Allen's heart was moved and his eyes filled with tears, as he repeated some of the simple lines of Bishop Ken's evening hymn, which had been a portion of the early instruction of a beloved mother and a worthy schoolmistress. After a slight elementary initiation into the first rudiments of learning, he was transferred from a boarding-school to his father's manufactory. But silks and sarcoenets, ribbons and gown-pieces, had no charms for the would-be chemist and astronomer. A way was soon opened for the indulgence of his taste. Joseph Gurney Bevan, a cousin of Mrs. Fry's, a well-known Quaker minister, author, and philanthropist, was a practical chemist, and kept a shop in Plough Court, Gracechurch Street. The boy Allen came under his notice; he took him into his employment, fostered the development of his talents, and aided him in his endeavours to repair the want of a more liberal education. Time strengthened the bonds which united them; J. G. Bevan soon admitted Allen to a share in his business, and ultimately gave up the whole of it to Allen and Luke Howard. It was well-established and lucrative. Allen's acquirements gave it more extensive usefulness, and it repaid him with considerable wealth. Such is an outline of his life as a tradesman. It was serviceable and creditable: but the praise, which belongs to it, is but a small item in his history. Whilst working his way up to commercial importance, he was strenuously educating himself for higher efforts. We find him studying Latin, French, German, drawing, short-hand, botany, and various branches of mathematics; sometimes under masters,

sometimes alone. By entering as a pupil at Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals, he acquired a competent knowledge of medicine and surgery. He was an active member of several medical societies, and took a leading part in the institution and management of the London Pharmaceutical Society, of which he was president up to his death, and of the Askesian Society, an association for mutual improvement in philosophical studies, which met at his house in Plough Court. Before this last society, he first began to lecture upon chemistry and experimental philosophy. In 1802, on the solicitation of Dr. Babington and Astley Cooper, he undertook the office of lecturer upon these subjects at Guy's Hospital, and continued to hold it for five-and-twenty years. He delivered, also, several courses of the same lectures at the Royal Institution, and in many other places: and always with great success. In 1807, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. The 'Philosophical Transactions' contain an ample vindication of his election in his valuable papers upon the effects of respiration on atmospheric air, and the proportion of carbon in carbonic acid, which were illustrated by a variety of chemical experiments, conducted by himself and his friend, Mr. W. H. Pepsy. He himself experimentally tested all the chemical improvements and discoveries of his time; was among the first to welcome the discoveries of Davy; and was one of the founders of the British Mineralogical Society, and afterwards of the London Geological Society. During all this time he retained his early passion for astronomy; and erected an observatory on his residence at Stoke Newington, where, at the close of many a weary day, his toils were forgotten in the details of this delightful science. These occupations led him to prepare, 'for his own amusement, tables of the right ascension and declination of the stars from the first to the fourth magnitude, with the places of some of the most interesting double stars.' They were found so useful, that he was induced to publish them in 1815, under the title of 'A Companion to the Transit Instrument:' the variations in right ascension and declination being given to the end of 1814. From these few facts, we may acquire a notion of his industry as a man of science.

But Allen is principally known in another character, and one more nearly connected with our present purpose—that of a philanthropist. The great cause of the Abolition of the Slave Trade was the first which called him forth; and ardently and laboriously did he exert himself in its behalf. He was a member, although not an original one, of Clarkson's committee; the two were soon bosom friends, Allen's house became Clark-

son's London home, and they worked together. The scarcity of provisions at the close of the last century directed Allen's attention to the condition of the poor, especially in the neighbourhood of Spitalfields. In conjunction with William Phillips, Allen called a meeting at the house of another Friend. Twenty persons attended; and thus was instituted the first society for providing soup and other cheap food in a time of distress. The machinery seems to have been principally settled by Allen, who wisely sought to unite with the sale of food the visiting the poor at their own homes; but he was outvoted. In 1807, Allen assisted in the formation of the institution for promoting the civilisation of Africa. He was one of its first directors, and devoted to it a large portion of his time. In the year following, he joined the little band, who met at Mr. Basil Montagu's chambers, in Lincoln's Inn, to found a society for the mitigation of capital punishments: and he exerted himself on several occasions to obtain remissions of the cruel sentences, then but too common. In one instance, he mentions his having been successful through the intervention of 'Friend Inglis,' a disguise, in which those who know him, will not fail to recognise the honourable member for the University of Oxford. In 1810, Allen instituted a periodical publication, called 'The Philanthropist,' intended to stimulate the active benevolence of the public, by pointing out to new beginners the right way of doing good. He wrote several papers in it. In 1812, the general distress led not only to the reorganisation of the Spitalfield Association, but to the formation of a general society for the relief of the labouring and manufacturing poor. To both of these bodies Allen was a guiding spirit, visiting applicants for relief at their homes, digesting the information contained in the multifarious correspondence of the general society, cramming Royal Dukes for speeches at public meetings: and ever ready,—not merely to assist with heart, hand, and purse in raising the starving poor over their temporary difficulties by temporary aid, but—to devote day and night to the acquisition of that intimate acquaintance with their ordinary state, on the bettering of which their permanent welfare must depend. In the same year, he took an active share in the erection and management of the London Auxiliary Bible Society, and the year afterwards in the formation of another for the same object in the north-east of London, and also of a Friends' Tract Society. In 1815, two societies, one for the diffusion of Christian sentiments on the subject of war, the other for the repression and reformation of the bands of youthful thieves, who then abounded in the metropolis, appear prominently among his most anxious thoughts.

After that time, he is to be traced in Savings Banks, Friendly Societies, and, above all, District Visiting Societies; by the general establishment of which the actual condition of the poor would, he thought, be really ascertained, while from the pains taken in the inquiries they would also be made sensible that they were really cared for, and be effectually encouraged to co-operate for their own improvement. But the question, which occupied the greatest share of his attention, from the year 1808 up to his death, was the Lancasterian system of education, which ultimately led to the British and Foreign School Society. A volume would scarcely suffice to detail the troubles in which he himself and several of his friends became involved by their generous interference in the affairs of Lancaster; but no difficulties could withstand the energy and steadiness of Allen. He continued treasurer of the School Society from its institution to his death, and lived to transplant its principles into most of the countries of Europe.\* Another benevolent enterprise, in which he had his share, was that of Robert Owen, of Lanark. In 1813, before the peculiar opinions of Robert Owen were developed, perhaps we ought to say, declared, he united with Owen, Joseph Fox, Alderman Gibbs, and Mr. John Walker, in the purchase of the Lanark Mills. It was a partnership, in entering into which Allen had no other motive than a wish to support what appeared to him to promise well for the comfort and welfare of a large body of workpeople, but it occasioned him great anxiety. General opinion soon fixed upon Owen the charge of converting Lanark into 'a manufactory of infidels.' Nothing could possibly be more abhorrent to the mind and views of Allen. He investigated the subject upon the spot, addressed the people clearly and forcibly in opposition to Owen's views, insisted upon an open recognition of Christianity in the appointment of a schoolmaster and the adoption of a certain system of education; and, finally, when he found all his efforts unavailing, he dissolved the partnership and withdrew.

Many other benevolent designs were indebted to Allen for invaluable assistance; but those which we have mentioned, are sufficient to show that his life may in truth be turned to, as to an index of the philanthropy of the age. No scheme, by whomso-

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\* Allen's interference in the affairs of Lancaster brought him into connection with the late Duke of Kent, who thought so highly of his judgment and clear business-like habits, that he made use of his advice in reference to his own affairs, and admitted him into very familiar confidence. Upon the death of the Duke, Allen administered to his estate.

ever started, if it were but founded upon liberal and unsectarian principles, and could be shown to hold out a prospect of benefiting mankind, lacked his support, — and, through him, the support of the Society of Friends. At his back there always followed the Foxes, Phillipses, Gurneys, Howards, Frys, Barclays, and other well-known Quaker names; whose numbers made Allen's own character and resources only a portion of the aid which flowed in on his accession to any cause. It is too much to say *ex uno disce omnes*: but it is only justice to conclude, from the support they rendered him, that the spirit of Allen so far animated even the mass, as to become the noble characteristic of the Society at large.

And now, having accompanied our Quaker tradesman, chemist, and philanthropist about half way through his peaceable crusade against vice and misery, it is time to be thinking of the Quaker gentlewoman, whose name he would rejoice to find we were associating with his own. Deprived of her mother by death, when in her twelfth year, Elizabeth Gurney and her six sisters were left by a trusting and indulgent father pretty much to their own guidance. He was by no means a strict Quaker, and the young ladies naturally outstepped even the wide and yielding boundaries, within which he thought it proper himself to walk. Their joyous hearts found gratification in many mirthful things, which were never dreamt of in George Fox's philosophy, and are sternly forbidden in that of his successors. They danced, and sang, and delighted to set off tall graceful figures in becoming dresses; nor did they ever object to 'rain bright influence' upon other eyes than those of plain and solid Friends. Any gaiety which disturbed the accustomed placidity of Norfolk, was sure to arouse the dwellers at Earlham. The arrival of a regiment of cavalry put Miss Elizabeth into what she terms 'a fly-away state;' she became idle, flirting, vain, and found amusement even in novels and scandal; a regimental band 'made her feel almost beside herself;' and a royal duke was more than her susceptibility could bear. At the age of seventeen she visited London in the height of the season. She went everywhere and saw everything, from Shakspeare to the musical glasses. Drury Lane and Covent Garden spread their magic mirrors before her. Hamlet and Bluebeard, the Siddons, Mrs. Jordan, Miss Decamp, and Banister, dazzled and fascinated her. With great begging, uncle Barclay took her to the Opera. Then comes a merry day with Peter Pindar; and quiet days, on which she had lessons in dancing; and morning visits to Mrs. Inchbald and Amelia Opie; and her hair was dressed *à la mode*, which at first made her feel 'like a monkey,' but after

the lapse of a month, and when she had mustered courage to be 'painted a little,' she thought that that dressing of the hair 'did look pretty for her.' The two things, in which she owns having especial pleasure, were scandal and grand company. The former might be had everywhere and at all times; at Earlham and in London—it never failed; but the grand company,—this was the attraction of the metropolis. At an opera concert, she makes us her confidantes, so far as to inform us, that 'the Prince of Wales was there; and I must say, I felt more pleasure in looking at him than in seeing the rest of the company' or hearing the music. I did nothing but admire his Royal Highness; but I had a very pleasant evening indeed.'

In the midst of all this frivolous and dissipating gaiety, a great change was coming on. Whilst every thing seemed most gorgeous, and the bright beams of earthly splendour shone around her in their treacherous magnificence, the grey twilight of sober Quakerism was softly stealing over her mind. On Sunday the 4th February, 1798, an American Friend, named William Savery, who was travelling in England upon a religious mission, attended at the Friends' Meeting House in Norwich. The seven Earlham ladies were there; they never missed the excitement occasioned by the presence of strangers. The assembly consisted of about two hundred persons. As Savery cast his eyes around the little meeting, its appearance pained his heart. It was the gayest company of Quakers he had ever seen. Gone were all the plainness and gravity of the ancient Friend. Wealth and luxury, the pride of life and the all-rements of the world, had evidently prevailed over the self-denying rule of their first founders. As his eye passed from bench to bench, he no doubt observed the seven Earlham sisters, seated conspicuously in a row, under the gallery. One of them, Miss Elizabeth was not only restless, as she always was at Meeting—she wooed all eyes by the smartness of her boots. They were purple laced with scarlet. Well might the mind of the pastor be stirred within him. He sat long in silence, brooding mournfully in the felt stillness of a Quakers' meeting; and when at last he rose, it was not to threaten, or denounce, but to give a faint and trembling testimony, under a sorrow almost too deep for words. What could he do but weep, who found in this, the very holy place of his sober faith, not the ark and the cherubim, the ancient symbols of their quiet unpretending worship, but the rags and relics of an abhorred and abhorring world? In tones of grief and tribulation he poured forth his lamentation for the loss of the pleasant things of the days of old, and many a heart was softened by the music of his melancholy voice.

To Miss Elizabeth the scene was something new. It is a significant token of the character of the Norwich Friends of that day, and of the depth of degradation into which the ministry among them had fallen, that awe-struck, wounded to the quick, as she describes herself to have been, her first feeling was one of surprise that such an impression should have been produced on her by 'a plain Quaker!' But the arrow had pierced too deep to be slighted. Torrents of tears astonished her relatives. She sought out the preacher. He was invited to Earlham. She sat like Mary at his feet, listening in wrapt wonder to the man who had first made her 'feel that there was a God,' and who now, in the bold spirit of a prophet of old, foretold the future eminence in the Church of the clever, warm-hearted girl who appeared before him, drowned in almost the sorrow of a Magdalene. For a time, the contest was doubtful. She would go into Norwich, 'full of heaven;' but, if it chanced that she met an officer who looked at her with apparent admiration, she returned home, as 'full of the world' as ever. In the midst, however, of London gaieties, Savery's prophecy haunted her; his eloquence renewed the fading impression of his first discourse; a letter or two followed, and then, farewell to purple boots and scarlet riding habits, and paint and dressing of the hair; farewell to flirting with officers and to the delighted contemplation of grand company. The 'thee' and 'thou,' and the plain cap and the close neckerchief, are all adopted; her wandering thoughts are brought into subjection, and she takes her stand on that path which points to the fulfilment of Savery's prophecy. The part of the *Memoir of her Life*, edited by two of her daughters, which exhibits the course of this transition,—the way in which she closed up her airy wings and passed, as it were, back again from the butterfly into the chrysalis,—withdrawing under shelter of an earnest nature into solitary and domestic thought and feeling—is very interesting, and it is not too long,—a praise which can scarcely be awarded to some other portions of the volumes.

The change had not been long accomplished, before she received an offer of marriage from Mr. Joseph Fry, at that time 'engaged in extensive business in London.' It would have been satisfactory, if the chronology of this part of the narrative had been established more decidedly. The want of dates may lead some persons to suppose that Mr. Joseph Fry may possibly be entitled to some share in the credit of the revolution effected through Mr. Savery. Her marriage occasioned her removal to London, where she resided for some years in St. Mildred's Court, in the Poultry, occupying one of those capacious old

houses which are to be found in secluded parts of the city; relics of the time when the merchant did not retire after business-hours to his suburban villa. Her husband's family were strict Quakers, and besides their frequent visits to St. Mildred's Court, the house of the young married couple was frequented, especially at the yearly meetings, by numbers of the old orthodox members of the persuasion. Grave venerable dames, dressed up in hoods, with 'camlet gowns and aprons green' and low-crowned broad beaver hats, after a fashion now forgotten (for even Quaker costume has its fashion), paced solemnly through Elizabeth's drawing room, in strong contrast to the gayer costumes and the lighter hearts to which she had been accustomed at Earlham. Quaker as she was, the change was a violent, and, for a time, a painful one. Often did her heart yearn for the fresh free air and the enjoyment of nature which she had left behind in Norfolk; and delightedly, when opportunity occurred, did she resume her place among the affectionate family at Earlham. As its members grew up, they took different paths. Some followed her example and adorned the profession of Quakerism; others united themselves to the Established Church; but neither change of opinion, nor lapse of time, nor separation of place, ever disunited them in heart. 'Who has such brothers as I,' was Mrs. Fry's triumphant exclamation many years after her marriage; and the memoir before us presents, in its extracts from her journals, many touching outbreaks of natural affection on the occasional reunion of this scattered fold.

Domestic ties gathered round Mrs. Fry quickly. Before the end of 1816 she was the mother of ten children, and an eleventh was added in 1822. In the meantime they had removed to a house at Plashet in Essex, which had been the residence of her husband's father, retaining along with it the town house in St. Mildred's Court. Her heart, however, it appears, all along was clinging in secret to that hope of greater usefulness in the Church, to which Savery had bade her look as her true calling. Such prophecies, which belong to the class that help to fulfil themselves, are common among the Quakers.\* The exhibition of 'gifts' by a young disciple is sure to elicit from some one, who feels that his own course is drawing to a

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\* There are many similar cases in the lives of the early Quakers. Allen was encouraged by prophetic communications from Mary Sterry, Mary Stacy, and Sarah Lynes, three Quaker Huldahs; and Savery's words were riveted into the mind of Mrs. Fry by another Huldah, Deborah Darly.



close, some words of encouragement, half hope, half compliment, which are received with a confidence, and remembered with a fondness, beyond what the utterer of them can have presumed upon. It is obvious from Savery's own account that he had no faith in his prediction; but such was not the case with his young friend. A nervous, sensitive being, living among women who were highly esteemed because they were believed to be divinely moved, and led by previous circumstances to anticipate that such was to be her own experience, she early began to feel the stirring of that spirit within, which it was considered criminal to disregard. For a time a womanly timidity held her back, but a deliverance which it was honourable to make, and which she thought it her duty to make, must sooner or later force its way. Always, as we have seen, highly impressible, Mrs. Fry went into Norfolk in 1809, to attend the deathbed of her father. The occasion was a peculiarly exciting one; it was in the presence of her brothers and sisters, and over the corpse of their beloved parent, that she first poured forth her prophetic strain. It consisted of a few sentences, almost entirely taken from Holy Writ. The same words were repeated by her at the time of the interment. The whole proceeding was so much in accordance with Quaker customs and notions, that it was not at the time regarded by the rest of the family as any thing singular or remarkable. But it immediately altered Mrs. Fry's position in the Society. She was no longer a mere hearer; she became a probationer for the ministry. The ice once broken, she proceeded in the natural course. Timidity wore off. She ascended from a few sentences to many, from speaking in her usual meeting house to ministering in other assemblies, from addressing her family to exercising the clerical function among strangers, and so on, step by step, until she became one of the most fluent and touching of the Quaker female ministry. Her ordinary style of address was calm and gentle, with great tenderness and an occasional solemnity, which was very striking. Her exercise of the ministry brought her into more intimate acquaintance with all the leading members of the Society; and, among them, with William Allen. He notices in his Journal, with great interest, the first and second occasions of her speaking in the Gracechurch Street Meeting, of which they were both members; and again commemorates her attendance and her speaking at a public meeting of poor persons in Spitalfields, called by the Quakers on the 31st December, 1812, at the request of Stephen Grellet, an eminent American Quaker, then in this country.

The powers, which she displayed at that meeting, appear to

have led to her first visit to a prison within the following month. Stephen Grellet and three other Quakers, William Allen being one of them, inspected the condition of the male prisoners in Newgate. The result made them anxious for similar inquiries concerning the female prisoners. The weather was inclement: the sufferings of the prisoners great. Mrs. Fry's address to the poor people in Spitalfields, 'many of them women with infants in their arms,' was fresh in all their memories, and they begged of her to undertake a mission, for which she had shown herself to be so well qualified. William Forster was particularly urgent with her; and after some hesitation she consented. Accompanied by Anna Buxton, a sister of her brother-in-law, Mr. afterwards Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, she proceeded to the prison on the 16th of February, 1813. Nearly three hundred women, with their numerous children, were crowded into four rooms comprising about one hundred and ninety superficial yards. They were all huddled together, 'tried and untried, misdemeanants and felons; without classification, without employment, and with no other superintendence than that given by a man and his son, who had charge of them by night and by day. Destitute of sufficient clothing, for which there was no provision, in rags and dirt, without bedding, they slept on the floor, the boards of which were in part raised to supply a sort of pillow. In the same rooms they lived, cooked, and washed. With the proceeds of their clamorous begging when any stranger appeared among them, the prisoners purchased liquors from a regular tap in the prison. Spirits were openly drunk, and the air was assailed by the most terrible language. Beyond that necessary for safe custody, there was little restraint over their communication with the world without.'—(I. 205.) These are some of the features of the old prison system. It is well to bring them now and then before our eyes again, lest we should forget from what horrors we have been relieved; especially at a time, when appearances must occasionally suggest the possibility that our eager benevolence, like the vaulting ambition of Macbeth, may 'have o'erleapt itself, and fallen on the other side.'

Four years elapsed between Mrs. Fry's first and second visit to these 'gloomy scenes of wickedness and woe;' so slowly does the good seed germinate. They were years of much occupation and frequent sorrow; years also of great mental strengthening. The power of self-control, that inner faculty by which she was enabled to check, and guide, and regulate her emotions, was developed in them and made perfect. The last remains of

youthful instability and frivolity disappeared; and when again she made her entry upon the scenes with which her name will be for ever associated, it was as one 'thoroughly furnished for the 'work in hand;' no Sister of Charity ever went forth to do more gently and devotedly the bidding of their common mission. There was a dignity in her quiet, simple, kindly, self-possession when among the prisoners, and at all times a holy self-prostration before Him, whose work she believed herself to be performing. The two natures blended beautifully together, for the turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and for subduing their reckless spirits to that service, which alone could set them free. The practical points of improvement which she strove to effect in prison discipline, were principally five:—1. The appointment of prison matrons, or female officers to have the custody of female prisoners. 2. The confinement of women in separate prisons. 3. The classification of prisoners by such elementary distinctions, as whether tried or untried, and according to the nature of their offences. 4. The instruction of prisoners, principally in religion, with a view to their reformation; and, 5. Their employment. We cannot follow her course; we cannot indicate it even in outline. It is unnecessary. The sound has gone out into all lands; to the very ends of the earth the labours of Mrs. Fry have contributed to make a prison, no longer a cage for wild beasts, but a 'religious place,' a place of repentance and sorrow, of discipline and self-denial, and,—alas, that it should be so,—to thousands of our fellow-subjects, the only place in which they are ever taught their duty to God or man.

The Quakers, who had led the way in reforming our Lunatic Asylums, are also entitled to the whole credit of the still greater social movement, which we are now describing. The subject was kept alive in the mind of Mrs. Fry, between her first visit to Newgate and her second, by the efforts of those around her, who were engaged on kindred objects; and when her plans were matured, the Ladies Association, by means of which they were carried out, consisted of the 'wife of a clergyman and eleven members of the Society of 'Friends.' All honour be to them! In well regulated prisons such voluntary efforts may be unnecessary, and even in some instances harmful; but, at the time when the association was first instituted, Newgate and the gaols throughout the kingdom were in ~~so~~ condition, in which the interposition of such associations was peremptorily required. Nor were their merciful labours blessed only to the unhappy wretches, whom they brought under the dominion of decency and order, and, in many instances, of religion.

The world at large was benefited by the attention which they drew to the vast importance of the reforms which they had at heart, and by the facts and materials which they furnished to the practical legislator. Within a very few years many Ladies' Associations were instituted. Mrs. Fry personally inspected prisons in all parts of Great Britain, and assisted in establishing many committees for visiting female prisoners. These journeys greatly increased her own experience and knowledge, and produced several publications which tended to diffuse information and create an interest in prison discipline. It was the natural consequence of success, that the sphere of the labourers who had achieved it should enlarge on every side. No prisoner, who had been once subject to their superintendence, was allowed to be lost sight of. Whether within Newgate or without, before trial or after conviction, during the voyage, on their arrival at the penal colony, or on their return home after their discharge — all, whom they had had once in charge, were perpetual objects of anxiety to them. Every ship, carrying out female convicts, was visited and supplied with religious books. Every convict was furnished with work to be performed during the voyage, and with a variety of articles conducive to cleanliness or occupation. Successive governments were prevailed upon to secure to criminals under sentence of transportation as favourable treatment, as was compatible with their situations and offences. But the appointment of matrons for convict ships, and a classification of convicts on the voyage, was more than could be accomplished. Mrs. Fry's chief associate in this part of her labours was a Quaker lady, named Pryor. Discharged prisoners, and the multitudes of vicious children who roam about the streets of London, were not left unnoticed. Miss Neave was induced, by a casual observation of Mrs. Fry's, to take the former under her charge, and Mrs. Shaw the latter. An asylum and a school of discipline were the result.

Such was the life of Mrs. Fry, in its leading and characteristic features. But wherever she went, at whatever place she might happen to reside for a few weeks, her presence was immediately visible. Brighton owed one of the earliest District Visiting Societies, established upon a comprehensive plan, to an accidental visit from her. All parties laid aside, for a while, their feuds, (for religion and even charity have their feuds,) and rallied round the Quaker lady. At this time her attention was drawn to the condition of the persons employed on the coast guard or preventive service. Stationed in dreary and almost inaccessible places; forbidden to hold communication with the inhabitants of the surrounding districts; un-

popular, and harassed by nocturnal watching in all weathers and by continual affrays with smugglers, their situation, and that of their wives and children, attracted her sympathy. The number of persons, who were thus cut off from all the ordinary sources of instruction, were found to amount to twenty thousand. She communicated with the government in their behalf, succeeded in forming a society, raised a liberal subscription among her acquaintance, and had ultimately the satisfaction of seeing established a respectable library of useful books at every one of the 620 stations round the coast of Great Britain and Ireland. Upwards of 52,000 volumes of all kinds were distributed for this purpose. She had only to touch them with her wand, and people became aware of their deficiencies, and ashamed of their indifference. She inspired others; and many of the most useful societies scattered over the kingdom,—as Visiting Societies, Friendly Societies, Servants' Homes, or the like,—sprang up from her casual presence in a particular neighbourhood.

We have indicated the principal home objects to which the benevolence of modern Quakerism has been directed by William Allen, Mrs. Fry, and their allies. But their exertions were not confined to Great Britain. The foreign labours of William Allen commenced almost immediately with the peace of 1815. There are certain little settlements of Quakers, or, 'persons 'professing with Friends,' in various parts of the continent of Europe, with which it has ever been the practice of the English and American Quakers to keep up a frequent intercourse. Pyrmont, in the centre of Germany, and Congenics in the South of France, the chief of these Quaker cities of refuge, have been visited by many of the leading Friends. George Dillwyn visited Pyrmont in 1790; John Pemberton died there in 1794; and William Savery, was there in 1796. No sooner was the continent opened to Englishmen by the general peace, than the eyes of the English Quakers fondly turned towards their continental brethren. 'A religious concern' for their welfare became general; and the yearly meeting of 1816 appointed William Allen to pay them a sort of official visit. He was accompanied by his wife, by Elizabeth Fry—Mrs. Fry's sister-in-law—and by several others of his personal friends. The journey was conducted after Quaker fashion, and was made conducive to many Quaker interests. Neither palaces, nor pictures, nor works of art, nor the great, nor the learned, were the chief attractions to these sober tourists. It was the gaol and the hospital, schools and charitable societies, worthy persons connected with them, or mystics—persons ordinarily held in disesteem,

as righteous overmuch, — that they ‘went out for to see.’ The journey was an unhappy one to poor Allen. He visited Pyrmont, and succeeded in reconciling a very unquaker-like feud, which divided its leading Friends; but at Geneva his wife was taken ill, and died. In the following year, he resumed the journey, which had been interrupted by this melancholy event. They reached Congenies: and the distant Friends, seated in that vicinity, were assisted in re-settling the discipline of their church upon the old foundation. The success of these efforts led him further a-field. In August, 1818, he set out with the American Friend, Stephen Grellet, to visit a small Quaker flock living near Stavanger, on the rocky coast of Norway; whence, having compassed the same important object as at Congenies, they went across from Christiansand to Christiania, Stockholm, Abo, and finally, to St. Petersburg. There Allen had already a friend at head-quarters. In their character of no respecters of persons, Fox and his disciples had from the first approached principalities and powers with great familiarity, and, on the other hand, had been treated with extraordinary favour by them. Some had had the boldness to try what impression could be produced upon the Pope; and one female, or more, had made her way into the presence of the Grand Turk himself. But the royal intimacies of W. Allen and Mrs. Fry were better grounded. The Emperor Alexander, on his visit to London, in 1815, had made many inquiries respecting the Quakers. He was attended by Allen to one of their meetings; and he afterwards had a long private interview with Allen and Stephen Grellet, respecting their tenets, in most of which he declared his concurrence. On his way to his place of embarkation, he visited the house of one of the Rickmans, from a desire to become acquainted with the home-economy of the sect; and, wherever he went, he expressed a wish that Quakers should establish themselves in his empire. Two years afterwards, being about to engage on some large works of drainage, in the neighbourhood of St. Petersburg, the Emperor directed inquiry to be made in England for a suitable manager for the work, and requested that a preference might be given to any member of the Society of Friends. The appointment was accepted by Daniel Wheeler, of Sheffield; and at the time of Allen’s visit to St. Petersburg, Wheeler was settled there with his family and several other Quakers. Prince Alexander Galitzin, and his secretary Basil Papof, were warmly interested in Allen’s favour through a letter from Lord Teignmouth. Thus every thing was open to them. They remained four months at St. Petersburg, inspecting all the public institutions, and holding repeated

conferences with the Emperor and other distinguished patrons of religious and charitable objects. Mrs. Fry's success in Newgate was a frequent theme; and by communicating information upon prison discipline, and exciting an interest concerning education, especially in the Russian army, this part of their visit it may be hoped was of essential service; at least, at the time it was full of promise. On the 16th of March, 1819, the travellers left St. Petersburg; they proceeded to Moscow, where they devoted a month to the minute examination of the public institutions, sending written reports to the Emperor and Empress Mother. From Moscow, they went into the Crimea, to visit a community of Malakans or Spiritual Christians, and certain colonies of German Mennonites, — the sect whose relief by Father William of Nassau under their conscientious objection to an oath was the honourable precedent, on which his descendant William III. afterwards relieved the English Quakers. Here, again, Allen's Diary presents us with a new and striking picture. Near Cherson, they visited the tomb of Mrs. Fry's predecessor, John Howard; and sailing from Odessa to Constantinople, Smyrna, and Scio, were eleven days crossing to Athens. In the Ionian Islands and Malta, they preached the cause of the British and Foreign School Society, with considerable success, returned through Italy and France, and reached home in February, 1820. The principal acquaintances which Allen formed during this long absence, were assiduously cultivated and kept open, as so many channels of philanthropical correspondence throughout nearly every country of Europe. He appears to have turned them from time to time to excellent account: and they peculiarly qualified him for his next continental service, — which was an endeavour to procure from the Congress of Verona a European declaration, pronouncing the slave trade piracy. Unfortunately, he succeeded only in part; but his intercourse on the subject with the Emperor Alexander, Prince Esterhazy, and the Duke of Wellington, is an admirable specimen not only of the humanity, but also of the skill of the Quaker diplomatist. On his way to Vienna, he visited the *Inspirées* at Nieuwied; and on his return from Verona, the Waldenses, in the valley of La Tour. In 1832, he again accompanied Stephen Grellet on a tour through various parts of Holland and Germany. Their first object of inspection was an Infant School, which one of the Quaker meetings in London had established at Amsterdam. The funds, by which it had been set up, were part of the proceeds of a Dutch ship, captured during the war, to which a Quaker had become entitled. As far as the owners could be traced, the money had been returned to them:

the residue was applied to founding an infant school in Amsterdam. It was the first school of the kind in Holland; at present, there are one or more of them in every town. They visited the colony of Frederick's Oord, and their old acquaintances at Minden and Pymont, minutely examined the Orphan House at Halle, discovered a colony of Mennonites at Maxweiler, in the Donau-moos in Bohemia, and extended their tour of research into public institutions of every kind throughout Austria and Hungary. Allen returned home in October, 1832; but rejoined Grellet at Paris, at the end of the following January, when they proceeded together into Spain. Even in this incomprehensible country, they met with the same facilities, and pursued the same course as they had done in other places. They made reports to the King upon the state of the public establishments in Madrid, Valencia, and Barcelona; and were the means of founding at Madrid a model school upon the principles of the British and Foreign School Society. The Bible in Spain may yet flourish.

Foreign travel, for the purpose of spreading her views of prison discipline, was also widely acted upon by Mrs. Fry. In 1838, and again in 1839, she visited Paris, and various parts of France and Switzerland. She came to the task with great advantages. Notices in newspapers, various published works, and the far pervading correspondence of the Quakers, had previously made her name 'a word of beauty' throughout the continent. In many places her plans had been already partially adopted. Here and there some single individuals were unostentatiously occupied, as Prison-Visitors, in giving them effect; hitherto, however, with little aid or sympathy from the public. But the presence of Mrs. Fry herself drew general attention to the subject. The French Government introduced female keepers into the prison of St. Lazare; and Ladies' Associations were recognised and encouraged in the principal cities of Europe. In 1840, Mrs. Fry returned to the continent in company with her brother Samuel Gurney, and William Allen. Their course lay through Ostend, Brussels, the Hague, Minden, Pymont, Hanover, Berlin, Dresden, Gotha, Frankfort, and Antwerp. Their passage was a line of light. Their arrival was the signal for public meetings; and Mrs. Fry expounded her lessons of philanthropy before such audiences as could hastily be gathered together. The effects were striking. From one end of their course to the other, the human heart was stirred, associations were formed, and measures taken for the improvement of prison discipline. The good work was kept alive by several subsequent journeys; and throughout northern and central Europe, with the exception



of Austria, the public was effectually aroused. By Quaker influence the same results were accomplished at Philadelphia; as since also, in many other parts of the United States.

Allen's latest labours were in connection with home colonisation and the establishment of industrial schools. He not only wrote upon the subject, but purchased a property at Lindfield, in Sussex, and practically illustrated his views by the erection of commodious cottages, with an adequate allotment of land attached to each. He built schools, in which the course of education comprised every subject that can be of use to the scientific, as well as to the merely practical, agriculturist. Household employments, useful trades, and even the higher branches of philosophical knowledge, came within the wide range of instruction, which Allen provided and superintended at Lindfield. There he passed the last few years of his life, and there he died at the close of 1843. Mrs. Fry survived him not quite two years.

The 'Life of William Allen' presents but few personal traits of the individual man. The strong benevolence of his nature lighted up his countenance with a sweet and cheerful joy. But, a quiet self-possession and an unconquerable perseverance were the leading features of his character. The former quality was occasionally disturbed and shaken, the latter never. Wherever he penetrated, — and his paths lay occasionally, as we have seen, in tracks where no one would have expected to meet with him, — he ever remained the same serene and placid person. To a man so born and bred, what trial of character could be greater, than the intimate relation into which he was received by the Czar of all the Russias? The Emperor Alexander, the most absolute of earthly potentates, admitted the plain Quaker into his closet, treated him with a respect entirely filial, revealed to him the secrets of his innermost life, consulted him upon points of the nearest and dearest interest, knelt by his side in private worship, and, in one word, showed him the reverence due to an apostle of peace and good will on earth, a messenger from the Most High. Once only does Allen seem to have been moved by the difficulties of his position; not that he was carried away by any feeling of self-elation, but almost vanquished by the overflowing of a softened heart. Taking leave of the Emperor, in 1819, at the close of a lengthened interview, Allen says, 'I rose, turned round, and knelt down; the Emperor came to the sofa, and knelt down by me, and now strength was given me beyond what I had ever felt before, and the precious power accompanied the words. When it was finished, I paused a little, and then rose; he rose soon after-

'wards, and we sat a few minutes in silence; we then prepared to take leave; the Emperor was much affected, and held us by the hand—it was a solemn parting; he raised my hand to his lips, and kissed it. I was now anxious to be gone, and moved towards the door, and, after taking leave of Stephen, the Emperor went hastily into another room.' (II. 16.) A scene of this kind was one, in which it was impossible to take part, without emotion. Much more did the deep trials of his private life—the successive loss, by death, of three wives, an only child, and a favourite niece who lived with him—pierce through his calm exterior: But in the ordinary business of the world, and in the transaction of the manifold affairs in which he was constantly engaged, he continued always composed and practical. He had little imagination, and had been irregularly and inadequately educated. Yet, in business, he was found ever ready with an expedient; prompt, not only in seeing what ought to be done, but in devising judicious means for its accomplishment. These were the qualities, which rendered him an invaluable coadjutor in the various societies with which he was connected. He attended their meetings, not to make speeches—(it was as late as the year 1818 before he uttered his first few words as a minister among the Friends)—but to help on the work, and to inspire the irresolute and depending with his own most Christian confidence. A belief in the triumph of truth and virtue is, in other words, a belief in the moral government of God; and what other source of moral courage can be half so sure? On the rejection, in 1810, of one of Sir Samuel Romilly's motions for the diminution of capital punishments, Allen simply remarked, 'We are by no means discouraged. . . . One great object, that of public discussion, is obtained; and whenever a proposed measure is founded on humanity and good sense, we need not doubt of ultimate success.' This was the law of his life. In this faith he persevered, and he has left us a noble example in the success, which, by never doubting, he realised at last. There is scarcely a principle of social improvement for which Allen contended, that has not already gradually worked its way to almost general acceptance. Let us too, therefore, hope that other truths, which are Utopian to-day, are only biding their quiet time, like seed committed to the faithful soil, to become in their turn facts to-morrow.

Mrs. Fry was a person essentially different. Quakerism might, in some respects, have narrowed the circle of William Allen's usefulness, for he had the elements of a philosopher and a statesman, in him—at least what looks such. But Quakerism was the very thing which, we may almost say, created the usefulness of

Mrs. Fry. Among the Quakers now-a-days, the ministry has principally fallen into the hands of women. This evident token of a decaying sect exercises a marked influence upon Quakeresses. Their practice in the ministry not merely gives them presence of mind and strength, and self-command; it calls out a talent, in which the sex has never been supposed wanting, but which they have seldom an opportunity of cultivating in any systematic or exalted form. Whatever we may lose in pathetic eloquence for lack of female orators in our pulpits or our tribunes, society, not nature, is responsible. This gift, which the women of other sects are obliged altogether to suppress, or to confine to their most intimate domestic circles, perhaps to their pens, raises those who possess it among the Quakers, to a pre-eminence in station and importance, which can scarcely be understood in other communities. It renders things easy and natural to them, which, in other women, would be considered unfeminine and indecorous. Mrs. Fry possessed this gift. Its exercise, and the business connected with the Society into which she was led by the ministry, were as a school of training for her other efforts. She who, by the opening grave, could pour balm into the hearts of sorrowing survivors, and animate them to fresh hope by the glorious anticipation of worlds into which death has never entered — affecting services in which Mrs. Fry was most effective — would have little difficulty in finding the way also to the sinner's heart; whenever the sanctuary of love and awe, so natural to every human bosom, had been degraded only, but not destroyed. She who could break the deep unearthly stillness of a Quakers' Meeting, and with tones 'full of tenderness and a restraining modesty,' — Charles Lamb must have heard Mrs. Fry, — and could deliver a message of love, or encouragement, or warning, or, perhaps, but it was seldom, of reproof — would be far less shaken by the fashionable auditories which assembled around her at Newgate and elsewhere, and came prepared to wonder and applaud. She was herself as ignorant as they were of the real importance of her 'calling,' when she first embarked upon it; but Quaker ministrations had taught and strengthened her. And whilst other ladies, whom a sense of humanity and duty had brought into those scenes, were able to do little more than flit here and there, inquiring, 'What has this woman done?' and 'Why are you in prison, my dear?' the veteran Quakeress hushed all such questions with one general condemnation, — 'We have all come short!' — and so, by acknowledging our common nature under its first of falls, made good an opening, through which the messenger of repentance and of peace might enter in.

It is, perhaps, the highest point of all in the character of Mrs.

Fry, that she was not spoiled by the public stage on which she was required to exhibit herself, and by the flattery which she had in consequence to undergo. A continual feeling of dependence was her safety. Retiring to her closet, and testing there the condition of her heart by a most rigid law, the contamination contracted elsewhere rose off at once and left her purified and invigorated for future combats. The severity with which she judged herself, and the contrition which she has occasionally expressed in her Journal, have alarmed the editors, lest her language should convey an unfavourable impression of her temper. Although the value and meaning of Mrs. Fry's remarks must be understood at once by those who can enter into the spirit in which she wrote, yet no excuse is wanted for the amiable jealousy of the editors. The fame of such a mother is not only an inheritance but a trust. And what an evidence have they produced! 'Those most closely connected with her, in the nearest and the most familiar relations of life, can unhesitatingly bear their testimony to the fact, that they never saw her in what is called a pet, or heard an angry or passionate expression of displeasure pass from her lips.' She had the good fortune to be born thoroughly feminine—which all women are not:—and her woman's heart and a host of feminine peculiarities stood by her to the last. Amidst all the attention paid to her, by persons of all ranks, from the late King of Prussia (who was to her pretty nearly what the Emperor Alexander was to Allen) down to the humblest penitent in a gaol or house of industry—she remained a simple unspoiled woman; coaxing her own children, and fondling the children of other people with 'the gentlest touch' that can be conceived; over-indulgent to those dependent upon her, and nervously sensitive upon a hundred little matters of ordinary life, which sink into utter insignificance by the side of the great objects to which her heart and higher nature had been raised. These were points of character which Quakerism could not master: and the revelation of them only makes us love and respect Mrs. Fry the more.

William Allen and Mrs. Fry are great examples. We have seen them walking in the paths of usefulness and philanthropy, with the simplicity and independence of private persons, but surrounded by a brightness as visible and distinct as ever followed the march of Cæsar with an army or a senate at his 'heels.' But whilst we do homage to the suavity and energy of their individual characters,—to the ability with which they combined new elements in their humane experiments, and arrived accordingly at new and admirable results,—let us not forget that, as in more ordinary campaigns, so in the warfare against ignorance and vice, but little can be brought to pass

without numbers, without organisation, without something like an army disciplined by the authority and animated by the spirit of its leaders. The prophetic sagacity of individuals may originate the first idea; the eloquence of individuals may clothe it in inspiring words, until a trumpet, louder far than what was heard at Roncesvalles, awakes the nations from their sleep. Such persons are our natural leaders on all great questions; their names become identified with the cause. And right they should. But the cause never could have triumphed unless it had enlisted numbers, men in every degree fitted for the several offices assigned to them, and contented to take their place obscurely in the ranks. 'In my Father's house are many mansions,' and many servants. 'They also serve who only stand and wait.' And, in this way, Quakerism has supplied many humble but scarcely less useful helpers, pioneers of still future victories, diffusers of that charitable yet persevering spirit, by which prejudice and bigotry are certain to be overcome in the end. Witness Hannah Kilham, a Quaker matron, venturing among the savage tribes of the coast of Africa, to learn on the spot by what means civilisation can be best introduced among them, and the traffic in flesh and blood most effectually stopped; witness her relation, Ann Kilham, from merc zeal in the cause of education, posting off to take charge of a model school at St. Petersburg; witness Daniel Wheeler, wandering forth among the islands of the Pacific on a voyage of missionary inspection; witness Joseph John Gurney silencing the clamours against negro emancipation by investigating its results on a personal visit to the West Indies; witness the Aborigines' Committee, who have undertaken the thankless office of shaming their fellow-countrymen into some consideration for those evils, which the wantonness or rapacity of British settlers has brought down upon an unhappy and unfriended portion of the human race. Finally, for we must close, witness the late exertions of the Quakers in behalf of famine-smitten Ireland.

Thank God, all our divisions, with their bitterness and their folly, disappeared for a season under our consternation and compassion, upon the occasion of this terrible calamity — the most fearful visitation of modern times: But taking into consideration their numbers and their means, no class of contributors can compare with the Quakers for the munificence, judiciousness, and earnestness of their bounty. Money has been a small part of what they have given. Leading men among them traversed the country from place to place, urging the bewildered sufferers to exertion, personally directing the efforts for relief, instructing

committees upon practical subjects, and carrying succour to wild or mountainous regions, into which traders in provisions had not penetrated, or from which they kept aloof. Shrewd, sensible reports, from clear-headed practical men, spread far and wide plain details of the actual condition of the famishing country. One of the best books upon the evils of Ireland and their remedy, is Jonathan Pim's, one of the secretaries to the Dublin Friends' Relief Committee. It was their appeals which first roused our brethren in America, and, by so doing, led the way to those magnificent contributions which constitute the most honourable exhibition of national sympathy on record. We cannot resist adding, that up to the present moment the citizens of the United States are continuing their noble offices of kindness to our starving and infected emigrants who still continue flying, in unusual numbers and unusual misery, to their hospitable shores. Liverpool must not complain. It is now some weeks since the Commission at New York had lost seven doctors, thirteen overseers, and two of the Commissioners themselves by the contagion, besides their President and most efficient man. The American subscriptions were placed at the disposal of the Society of Friends. They have proved themselves worthy of the trust. By an uncostly system of management, the funds in their hands have been made productive of the greatest possible amount of relief, at the same time, that the apportionment has been prompt and unsectarian.

It is from such facts as those we have commented upon, that we ought to estimate the character of Modern Quakerism. Some of their sectarian peculiarities are, upon their own showing, incapable of reasonable defence; but those who will take the trouble to judge of the Quakers by their lives, will come infallibly to the conclusion, that, however much they may differ from their fellow-worshippers in the outward tokens of Christian fellowship, they are distinguished by other still more noticeable singularities — not simply by their blamelessness and neutral virtues, but by being men of purpose and of action. They are singular throughout Christendom for the characteristic merit of frankly acting upon the principles they profess, and for having chosen, for their great principle of action, one worth all the rest — that of 'going about doing good.'

Yet the Society of Friends is said to be disappearing gradually in both the Old World and the New. We would gladly think that this is to be accounted for, both by the world having got so much better, that Quakers need no longer be very much afraid of it, and also by Quakers having got so much wiser, as not to continue standing out on trifles. We have drawn

nearer to each other: and should draw nearer still, were it not for the merely formal things in their Society. Their discipline magnifies the importance of externals; their 'minor testimonies' which are no longer needed as protections, operate as clogs, and obstacles, and snares. Upon these subjects, neither the warnings nor the experience of Mrs. Fry should be disregarded. On the one hand, she has commemorated many moments of unnecessary suffering, which she might well have spared herself, arising out of the passing over of so many members of her family into the Church of England. On the other, she found her own 'spiritual borders' widely extended by her more general religious associations: and she has left it as her recorded opinion, that 'nothing was so likely to cause the Society of Friends to remain a living and spiritual body, as its being 'willing to stand open to improvement.' This, in one sense—we will not call it a sectarian sense—we have no doubt is true. But, there is another form, and a still higher one—which however we might miss for a time both the Quaker speech and the Quaker bonnet—we should not be sorry to see their desire for improvement taking; we mean, that they would agree to break down the thin partition wall, which in this our day is so needlessly severing them, as a body, from many Christian brethren, with whom they are really one in spirit and in truth.

ART. X.—*Twenty-four Years in the Argentine Republic.* By COL. J. ANTHONY KING, an Officer in the Army of the Republic. London: 1846.

THE first element of the social union, obedience to a government of some sort, has not been found an easy thing to establish in the world. Among a timid and spiritless race, like the inhabitants of the vast plains of tropical countries, passive obedience may be of natural growth; though even there we doubt whether it has ever been found among any people with whom fatalism, or in other words, submission to the pressure of circumstances as the decree of God, did not prevail as a religious doctrine. But the difficulty of inducing a brave and warlike race to submit their individual *arbitrium* to any common umpire, has always been felt to be so great, that nothing short of supernatural power has been deemed adequate to overcome it; and such tribes have always assigned to the first institution of civil society a divine origin. In modern Europe itself, after the fall of the Roman empire, to subdue the feudal anarchy, and bring the whole people of any European

' nation into subjection to government (although Christianity in  
' its most concentrated form, was co-operating with all its in-  
' fluences in the work), required thrice as many centuries as  
' have elapsed since that time.

' Wherever this habitual submission to law and government  
' has been firmly and durably established, and yet the vigour  
' and manliness of character which resisted its establishment  
' have been in any degree preserved, certain requisites have  
' existed; certain conditions have been fulfilled, of which the  
' following may be regarded as the principal. First; there has  
' existed, for all who were accounted citizens, — for all who were  
' not slaves, kept down by brute force — a system of *education*,  
' beginning with infancy and continued through life, of which,  
' whatever else it might include, one main and incessant ingre-  
' dient was *restraining discipline*. To train the human being  
' in the habit, and thence the power, of subordinating his per-  
' sonal impulses and aims to what were considered the ends  
' of society; of adhering, against all temptation, to the course  
' of conduct which those ends prescribed; of controlling in him-  
' self all those feelings which were liable to militate against  
' those ends, and encouraging all such as tended towards them;  
' this was the purpose, to which every outward motive that the  
' authority directing the system could command, and every  
' inward power or principle which its knowledge of human  
' nature enabled it to evoke, were endeavoured to be rendered  
' instrumental. And whenever, and in proportion as the strict-  
' ness of this discipline was relaxed, the natural tendency of  
' mankind to anarchy re-asserted itself; the state became dis-  
' organized from within; mutual conflict for selfish ends neu-  
' tralized the energies which were required to keep up the  
' contest against natural causes of evil; and the nation, after a  
' longer or briefer interval of progressive decline, became either  
' the slave of a despotism, or the prey of a foreign invader.

' The second condition of permanent political society has  
' been found to be, the existence, in some form or other, of the  
' feeling of allegiance or loyalty. This feeling may vary in its  
' objects, and is not confined to any particular form of govern-  
' ment; but whether in a democracy or in a monarchy, its essence  
' is always the same; namely, that there be in the constitution  
' of the state *something* which is settled, something permanent,  
' and not to be called in question; something which, by general  
' agreement, has a right to be where it is, and to be secure  
' against disturbance, whatever else may change. And the  
' necessity of this may easily be made evident. A state never  
' is, nor until mankind are vastly improved can hope to be, for



‘any long time exempt from internal dissension; for there neither is nor has ever been any state of society in which collisions did not occur between the immediate interests and passions of powerful sections of the people. What then enables society to weather these storms, and pass through turbulent times without any permanent weakening of the ties which hold it together? Precisely this — that however important the interests about which men fall out, the conflict does not affect the fundamental principles of the system of social union which happens to exist; nor threaten large portions of the community with the subversion of that on which they have built their calculations, and with which their hopes and aims have become identified. But when the questioning of these fundamental principles is (not an occasional disease, but) the habitual condition of the body politic; and when all the violent animosities are called forth, which spring naturally from such a situation, the state is virtually in a position of civil war; and can never long remain free from it in act and fact.

‘The third essential condition, which has existed in all durable political societies, is a strong and active principle of nationality. We need scarcely say that we do not mean a senseless antipathy to foreigners, or a cherishing of absurd peculiarities because they are national; or a refusal to adopt what has been found good by other countries. In all these senses, the nations which have had the strongest national spirit have had the least nationality. We mean a principle of sympathy, not of hostility; of union, not of separation. We mean a feeling of common interest among those who live under the same government, and are contained within the same natural or historical boundaries. We mean, that one part of the community shall not consider themselves as foreigners to another part; that they shall cherish the tie which holds them together; shall feel that they are one people, that their lot is cast together; that evil to any of their fellow countrymen is evil to themselves, and that they cannot selfishly free themselves from their share of any common inconvenience by severing the connexion.”\*

These remarks, of one of the profoundest and wisest of modern thinkers, are well illustrated by the present situation of the confederate states which constitute the vast Argentine

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Mill's *Logic*, vol. ii. p. 599. See also Paley's *Moral Philosophy*, b. vi. c. 2. ‘How subjection to civil government is maintained.’

Republic. With a territory of which the British islands would be a subordinate province, with a more fertile soil, and a finer climate than are enjoyed by the most favoured parts of Europe; with means of transport by land unimpeded by natural obstacles, and by water assisted by extraordinary facilities; with plains swarming with horses and cattle, and with mountains where mineral riches tempted millions of British capital to migrate from the safest to the least secure of governments, — with all these natural advantages, the Argentine Republic is poorer, less populous, and less civilised, than it was when compressed by the ignorant and selfish tyranny of Spain. Under the Spanish rule the South American provinces contained a population of more than six millions excluding the Indians, a population nearly double that of the British North American colonies which declared their sovereignty. Thirty years of independence made those colonies one of the great nations of the civilised world. Thirty years of independence leave La Plata with its plains uncultivated, its mines abandoned, its cities half ruined, defenceless, and, therefore, constantly the victim of the insolence and injustice of foreigners, and at home oscillating between anarchy and despotism.

The difference between the fates of the two countries is generally accounted for by the existence in the British colonies of long habits of self-government, and the absence of those habits in Spanish America. This, however, as respects Spanish America, is not strictly accurate. The institutions of Spain both at home and in her colonies, have always favoured local self-government. A Spanish village is a little republic managing and mismanaging its own affairs with little interference on the part of the higher authorities. With respect to her colonies, the prevailing feeling of the mother-country was always the fear of revolt. She knew how little she possessed or deserved their affection, and, during the last century, her notorious weakness made it difficult for her to inspire fear. Her object, therefore, was to keep her dependencies still weaker than herself, and, for that purpose, to deprive them of the strength which combination would have given to them. In this attempt she was assisted by nature. They were scattered over a whole hemisphere, each inhabited district a mere oasis in the wilderness, to use Mr. Merivale's picturesque language, 'separated from the rest of the world by deserts of ice and snow; by ravines compared with which the depth of our Alpine vallies is insignificant, by provinces of forest or by hot and unhealthy plains.' Commerce, and even intercourse, between district and district was discouraged, and, indeed, generally prohibited.

Every town, and in many provinces, every village, was, in its internal affairs, a separate community, subject to the superintendence of a Spanish official, but knowing little of the higher colonial authorities, and still less of those of Spain. Of mere local government there was probably more in Spanish than in English America.

The real causes, ultimate and proximate, of the different fortunes of the two countries, are to be found in Mr. Mill's general propositions. Obedience to the law is the characteristic of the Anglo-American, resistance to the law, that of the Hispano-American. And the obedience of the one and the resistance of the other depend on the existence in the one, and the absence from the other, of two out of the three great requisites which he lays down as essential to civil subordination. One of these requisites, the possession of a common object of veneration and affection, was enjoyed, indeed, by the inhabitants of the viceroyalty of La Plata, when, in 1816, they declared their independence, as fully as by the men of New England in 1776. They were as much attached to Catholicism, or to what they supposed to be Catholicism, as the Bostonians were to their forms of Protestantism. But there the resemblance ends. Not that we imagine their agreeing to recognise the ecclesiastical authority of Rome would of itself constitute a sufficiently centralising object or 'fundamental principle of the system of social union,' to introduce and maintain in the present state of those countries that obedience to government, which Mr. Mill justly considers the first element of social union. It is scarcely necessary to say, in how eminent a degree, the first of his requisites, education, was possessed by the Anglo-American colonies. At the time of the signature of the declaration of independence, they were probably the best educated communities in the world. We are not speaking of the higher education, that which produced Washington and Jefferson, and Hancock and Jay, but of the education of the people, of an education which, in Mr. Mill's words, trains the human being in the habit and thence in the love of subordinating his personal impulses to the ends of society. But, in 1816, the Creole and mixed population of La Plata was scarcely better educated than the Indian. The principal habits which education ought to impart, are intellectual freedom and moral subordination. The Spanish Americans were trained to intellectual slavery and moral anarchy. The predominance of the priesthood, and the terrors of the inquisition, produced the first. The ignorance and corruption of the priesthood were the main causes of the second. They acquired, as a

priesthood always strives to do, the monopoly of the education of their flocks, but they had not the power, nor perhaps the will, to teach any thing beyond the routine of a debasing superstition. They fettered the mind and left the will unsubdued. The Jesuits, indeed, introduced into their missions a hot-house civilisation, in which the ruling principle was obedience. But they operated only on Indians, and their well disciplined communities, though secured from want, and never disturbed by crime, though apparently free from all the checks to population, moral and physical, never kept up their numbers, and fell to pieces the instant they were touched by a secular hand. With the exception, perhaps, of the Abyssinians, and of the Indo-Portuguese, the Creoles and mixed races of Southern Spanish America were in every sense the least educated communities claiming to be civilised Christians.

The third of Mr. Mill's requisites — a feeling of sympathy, of community of interests and of fortunes — was enjoyed imperfectly by the Anglo-American colonies previously to the conclusion of the war of independence; and even for some years afterwards. The New Englanders had long been allied against their common enemies, the Indians and the French; but the mutual relation of the other colonists was rather that of communities connected by the accident of a common sovereign, than of fellow countrymen. The war, indeed, united them for a time: to use the words of Washington in his last address, 'their independence was the work of joint counsels, and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.' But as soon as the pressure was removed, the elements which it had kept together recoiled. State began to legislate against state, and to pass laws inconsistent with the treaties and the obligations by which the congress, which had necessarily acted as the common organ, had bound itself. Disputes began about boundaries, often depending on inconsistent grants, and false notions as to the configuration of the country. Force was threatened, and sometimes employed; and the confederacy was in imminent danger of splitting into a mere geographical aggregate of jealous, and perhaps hostile, republics. But even in this anarchical period, when the union of the states was weakest, the cohesion in each state was perfect. No town or district ever contemplated withdrawing from the larger community of which it was a member. It might disregard the distant congress, but remained obedient to the authorities of its state. And when, in 1788, the energy of a few great men, and the good sense and forbearance of the people, converted the loose confederacy of 1776 into a real union, and the separate states into provinces of one

republic, the loyalty which had been borne to the state was transferred to the nation; and notwithstanding the apparent dissimilarity of interests, and the real dissimilarity of character in the western, the northern, and the southern states; notwithstanding the Anglo-Americans have scattered themselves from sea to sea, and over twenty degrees of latitude; the inhabitants of this vast continent feel themselves more thoroughly fellow countrymen than the communities constituting any great European state, with the exception of France. What the feeling of nationality can do, unaided and alone, towards establishing obedience to government, France will probably soon enable us to know.

In Spanish America the opposite tendency has been equally remarkable. To a certain degree this is characteristic of both the races, Spanish and Indian, of which, or out of which, the mixed population of Spanish South America is constituted. Like the Greek, the Spaniard is attached rather to his province than to his country. He is a Castilian, an Andalusian, or a Biscayan; and the Indians, as is the case with all savage tribes, are split into small communities, always unfriendly, and usually at war. We have seen that this proneness to disunion was promoted by natural obstacles to communication, and by the policy of the mother country. The result is not ill summed up by Colonel King. He says, 'that during the 'twenty-four years which he passed in the country, there 'existed no sympathy of feeling or action, morally or politically, 'either between the government and its component provinces, 'or between the provinces one with another. Each petty 'governor was irresponsibly supreme in his province, and 'totally unaccountable to any other authority; and the various 'provinces were permitted to declare and wage war against one 'another, as in the case of Salta and Tucuman, without the 'intervention of a word. No sufficient political unity had been 'effected, and no political head, that should command the 'confidence of the people, established.' No wonder, therefore, that the anticipations in which the sanguine friends of liberty and civilisation were indulging in 1824, when Mackintosh presented a petition from the merchants of London for the recognition of the Independent States of South America, have been so grievously disappointed: and that the New World, which Canning boasted he was calling into existence, has not yet been found to answer to his call, or indeed to have yet got out of chaos.

We have thought Colonel King's book worthy of a review, not for the literary merits of the work or the personal merits of

the author. The book is ill written, and the character of the writer is commonplace—that is to say, commonplace in America. The carelessness with which he submits to be tossed about from danger to danger, and from one form of wretchedness to another, is not of English growth. But his book, though of little value as a composition, and, we suspect, not very trustworthy as a personal narrative, is instructive as a picture, and, we believe, as far as the author's means of observation extended, a faithful picture, of a country, of which we ought to know much, and actually know very little.

The inhabitants of the vast territory drained by the rivers which unite in the Plata, depend for their manufactures on Europe or on the United States. At present, or, to speak more correctly, until we chose to throw away our commerce with them, they have shown a preference for English goods. Out of thirty-nine millions of dollars, the value of the importations into the port of Buenos Ayres in 1836 (the last year for which we have seen returns), twenty-three millions, or nearly two-thirds of the whole, consisted of British goods. If the country had remained tolerably tranquil, and we had not been drawn into a quarrel with it, of which neither the origin nor the continuance has been yet fully explained, that commerce might by this time have been doubled. Monte Video, more than eighty miles nearer to the sea, with a far better harbour and a more civilised and more friendly population than Buenos Ayres, offers stills greater commercial advantages. And Paraguay wants nothing but our recognition to be a more important state than the whole Argentine Republic and the Banda Oriental united. As an independent government, and it is and has long been independent *de facto*, it would, of course, have a right to claim the free navigation of the Parana, or, as it ought rather to be called, the Paraguay, from its capital, Assuncion, to the Plata and to the sea. And we trust that no British minister will allow this claim to be resisted by the governments which occupy the lower banks of the stream. We should then have a friendly port in the centre of the South American continent.

The opening of Colonel King's autobiography is characteristic:—

‘In the year 1817, at the age of fourteen years, I left my native city, New York, and, without a dollar in my purse, took passage for Norfolk. Arrived there, by the sale of a pocket knife, I obtained food; and strolling along the wharfs, found a vessel bound to Baltimore. On my arrival there, I took up my quarters at the house of a Mr. Pitcher. He obtained for me shipping papers on board the brig *Wycoona*, received my advance money, and gave me as an outfit two

shirts. Where the vessel was bound to I neither knew nor inquired.' (P. 3.)

The vessel was bound for Buenos Ayres, and on its arrival King was put ashore as unfit for naval service. After supporting himself for a few months as shop-boy to a perfumer, he obtained an ensigncy in the federal army of the Argentine Republic, and was attached to the corps of General Ramirez, called by him Ramarez, the governor of the province, or, as it called itself, the state of Entre Rios.

He finds General Ramirez marching against Artigas, who, at that time, claimed the title of chief of the independent state of Banda Oriental.

Of Artigas Mr. King tells little, and that little is incorrect. As his influence on the fortunes both of Buenos Ayres and of Banda Oriental\* has left permanent consequences, we will add something to Mr. King's meagre notice. He was born in 1766, in Monte Video, the son of Don Martin Artigas, a considerable landed proprietor. In early life he joined the smugglers whom the anti-commercial legislation of Spain and of Portugal attracted to the long line of frontier separating their possessions. Nothing seems to brutalise men more than the attempt to repress, by severe punishment, conduct which appears to them innocent. Smugglers and poachers have always been violent; and the cruelty of the South American government, operating on a semi-barbarous, and, as we now find, a bold population, made the contrabandistas a species of banditti. Artigas had great qualities, bodily and mental. His strength and dexterity, his courage and his skill, were all remarkable, and he soon was the acknowledged chief of the ruffians who infested the northern border of La Plata. The viceroy adopted a plan familiar to the Spanish authorities. He offered Artigas pardon, a large salary, and rank, if he would enter the service of the government. Artigas accepted, was appointed conservator of the border, turned his whole force, without mercy, against his old associates, and gave to the country which had been confided to him security which it had never enjoyed before. When Buenos Ayres began the war of independence in 1810, Artigas was for some time the principal support of the Spanish cause. In 1811, he suddenly turned patriot, and assisted the Buenos Ayres force, which was attempting to revolutionise Banda Oriental, and gained for it the battle of Las Piedras, under the walls of Monte Video.

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\* Accurately, we ought to say *The Banda Oriental*. Banda Oriental means Eastern Bank.\* The political designation of the country is *The Republic of the Uruguay*.

The contest between the Spanish and revolutionary forces was long; and the Emperor Pedro found in it a pretext for adding a new province to an empire already inconveniently and dangerously large. He availed himself of the dangerous principle which Mr. Canning is guilty of having, in the great case of *Greece v. Turkey*, introduced into international law, that a third power has a right to say to two independent states, or to two parties in an independent state, 'Your quarrels are inconvenient to me, they hurt my trade, and set a bad example to my subjects; it is my duty, and therefore my right, to put an end to them.' And the means by which he proposed to effect this, was to incorporate Banda Oriental with Brazil. He invaded it with what in those countries is a considerable army, about 8000 men. The Buenos Ayres troops retired, but Artigas declared Banda Oriental to be an independent state, and himself to be its chief; and though the Brazilians forced their entrance into Monte Video in the beginning of 1817, he prevented their authority from being recognised in the greater part of the country. His assumption of independence irritated Buenos Ayres, and before the time of Mr. King's Narrative he was twice attacked by the Argentine troops and repelled them. We now insert Mr. King's version, which is a mere tissue of errors and misrepresentations; believed by him, we have no doubt, but without inquiry: —

'This Artigas, famous alike for his cruelty and his bravery, was the first man who raised the brand of discord in the new republic. He was a resident of Entre Rios, and, instigated by the Spaniards, set on foot a rebellion against the constituted authorities of his country. His influence and disaffection after a short time extended over his own province, together with Corrientes, Misiones, and a part of the Banda Oriental; the latter of which, though not a province of the Argentine, received the sympathies of that country, and was almost considered as a part of their own territory.

'Having raised an army, and taken a position on the western border of the Banda Oriental, he bade defiance to the Supreme Director of the Argentine; and it was to suppress this revolt that Ramirez was ordered to move.' (P. 12.)

Artigas was defeated in a bloody and decisive battle. He took refuge in Paraguay, and met with the usual fate of those who trusted to the hospitality of Francia. He was detained there till his death, about the year 1826. We have said that the conduct of Artigas left permanent consequences. We have little doubt that if he had not lived, Banda Oriental would now be a portion of the Brazilian empire, or of the Argentine Republic. He first declared its independence. For many years he supported it against the Spanish party within, and the



attacks of Brazil and Buenos Ayres from without; and though at his death the town of Monté Video was still held by a Brazilian garrison, two years afterwards Buenos Ayres and Brazil, by the treaty of 1828, declared Banda Oriental to be 'a free state, independent of all and every other nation, under the form of government which it may judge most convenient.'

There can be no doubt that the independence which he gave to his country, if it can be preserved, is beneficial to Europe. If both banks of the Plata were in the hands of one sovereign, and that sovereign felt the dislike of European intercourse, which has characterised many of the American rulers, and few of them more than the present dictator of Buenos Ayres, Rosas, he might seriously impede our trade with the interior. And if Monté Video were under the power of Brazil, it is probable that the jealousy of Rio Janeiro would lead that government to cramp the commerce of the Plata. The independence of Banda Oriental is, we repeat, the best arrangement for us. But whether it be a blessing or a curse to that country itself, is a question still undecided. It may be thought that the best fate for Banda Oriental, up to the present time, would have been to be a member of the comparatively tranquil empire of Brazil. Spanish and Portuguese races, however, do not easily amalgamate; and in this case there was a mutual hostility of centuries. But the Argentine Republic, with its chronic civil war, would have been a still worse associate. On the other hand, independence has not saved Banda Oriental from civil war, and has exposed her to the attacks of Buenos Ayres, and to the fatal friendship of France. Upon the whole, we are induced to think, that as far as the interests of the country are concerned, incorporation with Brazil would have been the least objectionable of three alternatives — all very undesirable; and that the courage, and perseverance, and self-devotion of Artigas, have only added one more to the instances of perversely misdirected heroism with which the annals of Spain and of Spanish colonies abound.

Soon after the defeat of Artigas, Mr. King had a further specimen of the nature of the service in which he was engaged. His commander, General Ramirez, informed his troops that they were to march to Buenos Ayres, in order to overthrow Puyrredon (called by Mr. King Pursdon), the supreme director of the republic — the defender of Buenos Ayres in 1807 — the man from whom King, a few months before, had received his commission. In Spanish America the immediate and subordinate authority, the *species infima* of power, has always the best chance of obtaining obedience. No remonstrance appears to have been made by the troops — no opposition is offered to

their march — and as soon as they approached the capital, Puyrhedon fled to Monte Video. Who succeeded him it is scarcely worth while to inquire, for many of the supreme directors held office only for months, or even weeks.

He was immediately engaged in a more arduous service, for in these countries to support the existing authority is more dangerous than to attack it. *Pecior est conditio possidentis.* The three days of leave, which he had obtained on entering Buenos Ayres were, he says —

— ‘not yet expired, when General Ramirez received orders to move forthwith against General Carrere, who was then on his route to Chili, with the view of revolutionising that country; and we were soon once more on the move over the *pampas*, with the prospect of a march of about two hundred leagues before us.

‘Carrere was a native of Chili, of high family — a family that had been supplanted in its authority by the family of O’Higgins. Two of the General’s brothers had some years before been shot in the province of Mendoza, in the Argentine, for what cause I know not, and the one now on his march to his native country, for the purpose of establishing what he considered his family right, had, a short time previously, landed at Buenos Ayres, on his return from the United States; and, with plenty of funds, began gathering an army of adventurers in the interior, for the purpose of crossing the Cordilleras into Chili. This movement of Carrere the Government of the Argentine felt called upon to check, and it was for that object that the division under Ramirez was ordered to march.’ (P. 22.)

As is usually the case in Mr. King’s accounts of any events which he has not witnessed himself, the greater part of this statement as to the Carrera family is incorrect. The three brothers and their sister, a woman of remarkable talents and beauty, certainly belonged to one of the first families in Chili. So much is true. But they were the supplanters, not the supplanted. The junta which, on the 18th of Sept. 1810, superseded the authorities of St. Iago, and was acknowledged by all the provinces of Chili, was, perhaps, the wisest and most moderate of the revolutionary governments of Spanish America. It was the creation of the aristocracy and middle classes, not of the populace; and its errors were on the side of moderation. It acknowledged Ferdinand VII. — it retained the Spaniards not merely as fellow citizens, but in the offices and places of trust of which it found them possessed. It summoned a congress which enacted freedom of trade, salaried the clergy, and prohibited their taking dues or offerings from their parishioners; and was the first of the governments of America which provided for the gradual abolition of slavery. Against this junta and con-

gress the Carreras rose, inflamed the anti-Spaniard and anarchical feelings of the rabble, and seduced the army — as any one who is wicked enough may always do in revolutionary times — dissolved the congress, and divided between themselves the supreme military and civil powers. The authority of Spain was now thrown off; and in the beginning of the year 1813, about a year after this revolution, Chili was invaded by a force despatched by the viceroy of Peru. The Carrera government was oppressive and unsuccessful. It was overthrown in 1813; the command of the army entrusted to O'Higgins, one of the most estimable of the American leaders; and the supreme directorship to Don Francisco Lastra. During his presidency, a treaty was made between the viceroy of Peru and the revolutionary government of Chili, through the mediation of Captain Hillyard, R. N., on the basis that Chili should return to its allegiance, but retain its free trade and its internal administration, in short, should enjoy the protection of Spain, but virtually retain its independence. To oppose this treaty, which gave to Chili, with peace, all that it could have acquired by war, the Carreras raised the populace of St. Iago, deposed Lastra, and again usurped the government.

With a folly as great as that of the Chilenos, but less apparent, the viceroy of Peru refused his ratification, again invaded the country, and in the course of a few months re-conquered it; drove into exile both O'Higgins and the Carreras; and remained absolute master until 1817. In the beginning of that year, a force from Buenos Ayres, under the command of San Martin and O'Higgins, crossed the Andes from Mendoza, by the pass so well described by Sir Francis Head; and after a long and, more than once, doubtful struggle, the Spanish troops were driven out. The two younger Carreras were in the Argentine territory when the army of San Martin left it. They were known to be the personal enemies of the new supreme director, O'Higgins. Twice they had overthrown what appeared to be established governments. It was thought likely that they would make a third attempt. They were seized, tried on some frivolous accusation, and executed at Mendoza on the 11th of April, 1818, a few days after San Martin had secured the independence of Chili by the victory of Maypo. The elder brother, the Carrere of Mr. King, collected an irregular force, many of whom are said to have been Indians, and menaced not, as Mr. King tells the story, the government of Chili, but that of Buenos Ayres. It was against this force, and in defence of the government of Buenos Ayres, not of that of Chili, that General Ramirez was marching.

They found Carrera posted in the town of San Luis, the capital of the vast province of that name. A capital so little resembling a town, that Sir Francis Head, when he first reached it, asked how far he was from it, and was told that he was in the middle of it.

The wild habits of a semi-savage life, the constant dangers from hostile Indians, and from accidents, the general recklessness of uncultivated minds, and perhaps the high bodily health and firmness of nerve produced by constant temperance, exposure, and activity, have given to the inhabitants of the Pampas an indifference to danger, at least to the dangers to which they are accustomed, not to be found among much better disciplined troops. Like the Irish, they seem impelled by a love of the excitement of fighting, and when this animal passion is aided by the hope of plunder and by the hatred which every town and even village in South America cherishes against every other town and village, they attack their opponents as soon as they see them, often without knowing what is the cause of quarrel, or what are the chances of success. In the present case the force of Carrera was superior in numbers and in position. That of Ramirez, however, though men and horses were exhausted by a long march, instantly attacked. After a severe contest they were repulsed, and retired to a position about two miles from the town. Here, in a few hours, they were attacked in their turn by Carrera, broken, and after losing nearly half their numbers, those who escaped the battle and the pursuit rallied and bivouacked on the plain, about five miles further on their retreat. They were again attacked during the night, and dispersed; Villa de los Ranchos, a town some marches distant on the road to Buenos Ayres, being the point of rendezvous. By the time that they had collected together again, to the number of about 700 almost famished and dying men, they learned from a caravan of traders the characteristic fact, that General Echague, whom they had left in command of their reserve, had gone over with his troops to the opposite party, and was then halting at Los Ranchos, on his march to hem them in between his own force and that of Carrera.

Our first step was to secure the carts of the caravan, which were about thirty in number, and very large. Of these we formed a barricade, leaving a hollow square, intended as a place of retreat, if driven to such a necessity. Three or four of the bullocks by which the carts had been drawn furnished a meal for our almost starving company; and before Echague was aware of our position, we were greatly improved in condition, both of body and mind. In the course of the morning, a foraging party from Echague rode within half a

mile of us; and, after a moment's halt, wheeled, and returned to the Villa on a full gallop. They had discovered us; and at nine o'clock we heard the long-expected clarion of the traitor. Our little complement of seven hundred men were drawn up outside of our barricade, to oppose a force of near three thousand.

Our ammunition was soon nearly exhausted, and, after the first show of resistance, we took shelter within the enclosure of our breastwork. Here, from loopholes cut through the bottoms of the carts, which had been placed upon their sides, we poured such a well-directed fire, that our assailants found it prudent to retire beyond the range of our guns. They had secured the remaining bullocks belonging to the caravan, and sat down at a short distance, determined to starve us to death. Thus imprisoned, we remained all that day and the following night without food or drink. The sufferings of the wounded were extreme; and early next morning a council was called, at which it was proposed that we should send a flag of truce, with an offer of capitulation. The proposition was at first strenuously opposed; but the cries of our companions, begging, with their dying gasp, for "Water! water!" wrought upon the hearts of our most determined men, and we at last reluctantly consented. Captain Boedo was selected as our messenger, and he left the breastwork just as a large body of Echagua's troops had commenced a movement towards us. Seeing the flag, they halted at a distance of about three hundred yards. Boedo met them, delivered his message, and was instantly brought out in front of their column, his hands were tied behind him, and he was shot before our eyes! This was instantly followed by a headlong assault. Our companions fought with such desperation and slaughter, that our enemies were once more forced to retire, and with them, to our astonishment, some forty of our own men rushed from the enclosure, and attempted to cover their desertion in the general retreat; few, however, accomplished their design, for they were a close mark, and the carbines of our indignant troops brought many of them to a disgraceful death. Another council was now called: the sufferings of the whole body had become intense; officers and men had become perfectly desperate, and it was resolved, that rather than stay there, dying inch by inch, we would make a sortie, and fall upon the sabres of our enemy. General Ramirez, the good, the brave man, was alone in opposition to this measure. "Gladly," said he, "would I give my own life as a hostage for such gallant fellows, would such an act appease yon bloody monster." His words were interrupted at this moment by the discovery that our barricade was on fire, whether by accident or design I know not, but the flames rose and crackled so fiercely among the dry timbers and wood-work of the carts, that to stay them was impossible. The whole body rushed forth, and in an instant we were fighting for life on every hand, the enemy having completely hemmed us in, in a common centre. During the fray I received a blow upon my breast from the butt end of a musket, which fractured my ribs, and felled me to the ground. In attempting to rise, I was instantly seized by

two men, and, on looking about me, I discovered several of our friends prisoners like myself, and among them General Ramirez.

'The fight lasted but a few moments, yet the ground was strewn about me with the dead and dying, for so long as a man had been found in the attitude of resistance, he was put to the sword. Poor Ramirez! his fate we all knew. No ceremony was required by these butchers; and without trial, or even the calling of a council, to give his death the colour of an execution, as soon as the skirmish was over, he was led before the little remnant of his own army, his arms pinioned, a guard at his side, and a file of soldiers following in his rear. No word was spoken; but as the brave man knelt before his murderers, he cast upon me a long, an earnest look, which I shall never forget, and at the next instant fell dead before me. The head was severed from his body on the spot, and sent as a trophy through the seditious towns of the republic.' (P. 30.)

So far we have followed step by step the progress of Mr. King, as his individual story produces a more distinct picture of the strange people among whom he was thrown, than could be given by any general statement. But the monotonous exhibition of treason, treachery, cruelty, and selfishness, would tire our readers. They will, probably, be satisfied by being told that Carrera was soon afterwards, that is, in the beginning of the year 1820, defeated by the governor of Mendoza, and shot on the spot where his brothers had been executed two years before; that Mr. King was released by a party of his own friends, under the command of General Bustos, again captured, again set free, and ultimately found his way to San Juan, the capital of the republic of San Juan de la Frontera.

After remaining at San Juan for some weeks, he was arrested, in consequence, as he tells us, of his having on a trial given evidence unfavourable to a friend of the governor.

'At the end of a month,' (says Mr. King) 'the officer of the guard entered my cell, and told me that the governor had sent for me. This was the first person with whom I had spoken since my incarceration.

'The governor spoke to me in a tone of kindness, which persuaded me that I had fallen into good hands, and raised my hopes of an immediate liberation. There were many persons in the hall at the time engaged with the governor on business, and I stood apart, waiting his leisure. Others came and went; until, at the end of two hours, being for the first time unoccupied, he arose, and said, "Be kind "enough to follow me." I obeyed; and he led me, without speaking another word, to the *Carcel*, or underground prison, connected with the building in which we then were; and, calling an officer of the guard, said to him, "Take charge of this man. You have your orders." My heart fell; for I well knew that in these cells were confined none but prisoners of state, few of whom ever quitted their incarceration.

tion but to meet an execution in the prison-yard. Thus confined, the prisoner awaits in solitude the decision of a despot. From day to day, from hour to hour, perhaps for months, he may remain; and when at length an officer enters the prison-house, holding a sealed packet in his hand, and invites the prisoner forth, none know its contents until the parties have reached the yard. Here the packet is opened: if it direct his release, he is set at liberty; if it command his death, he is immediately shot. I was at once placed in a cell, *entro porto* (or between two doors). My cell being about four feet wide, by twelve in length, with a small grating at the top of the wall over one of the doors, through which I could see in the distance the snow-clad summits of the Cordilleras; and a corresponding grating at the opposite end, from which I could see only the tops of the orange-trees in a neighbouring garden, with their golden fruit flashing in the sun-light.' (P. 58.)

From this confinement he was released by accepting the offer of a commission in a force which General Urdemina, a Peruvian, was raising in the republic of Salta for the purpose of assisting the independent party in Upper Peru.

There is throughout Mr. King's work such an absence of dates, such a misplacing of events, such a confusion of names, and such an ignorance of all facts beyond his own observation, that it is difficult to say at what periods the incidents of which we have now to give a sketch occurred. The following dates, however, may assist the reader. He appears to have been released not long before Bolivar entered Peru, which he did on the 1st of Sept. 1823. The Royalist commander in Potosi at that time, was Olaieta (called by him Olanietta). He maintained himself for a few months after La Serna, the Spanish viceroy, with his whole remaining forces, had surrendered at Azacucho, and was killed in or about April, 1825. The author's marriage, which closed his military life, seems to have taken place in 1829. (P. 216.) Mr. King's services in support of the independent cause in Peru, appear, therefore, to have taken place in the years 1823 and 1824. His subsequent adventures between 1824 and 1829.

It is remarkable that Peru, though the part of America least accessible from Europe, was that in which Spain longest preserved her authority. There seems, indeed, no reason to suppose that the Royalist forces would have been subdued if they had not been attacked first from Chili by San Martín, and afterwards from Columbia by Bolívar. The Peruvian insurrection was easily put down. This was probably owing in part to the low moral and intellectual condition of the Creole population of Peru, partly to the fierce hostility of the Indians, who from the first conquest up to the present time, have been and are

still more oppressed by the Creoles in Peru than in any other portion of the American continent, and partly to the great civil and military talents of the Spanish commanders. La Serna, Canterac, and Valdez would have done honour to any service. But the great support of the Spanish cause was the difficulty of the country. Peru is intersected, from north to south, by two vast chains of mountains, sometimes approaching between 100 miles of one another, sometimes separated by an interval of 500. It is divided, therefore, into three great districts; that beyond the eastern chain, generally called the Montana; that between the two chains, generally called the Puna; and that between the western chain and the sea, called the Valles.

The country that lies between the eastern slope of the Andes and Brazil, is covered by primæval forests, impenetrable to any but the unsubdued savage tribes by which they are tenanted, so far as they are tenanted by man. That between the two chains is a chaos of mountains, consisting principally of table lands of from 12,000 to 14,000 feet high, intersected by ravines 4000 or often 5000 feet deep, and concealing vallies of great fertility, but without any communications except paths, impassable even by mules.

The third district, the Valles, extends along the coast for about 1700 miles, and varies in breadth from seven miles to fifty. It is unrefreshed by rain, and watered only by the streams which at intervals of from twenty to ninety miles rush westward from the Cordilleras. It is to these streams that it owes such capacity as it has for cultivation. Where their banks are not too high and precipitous the water is used for irrigation, and under a tropical sun what was a desert becomes a garden. The rest is an arid expanse of sand or rock, sometimes rising into hills which in any other country would be called mountains, sometimes intersected by impassable ravines. The best description of it is contained in the 'Memoirs of General Miller.' 'No stranger,' says the author, 'can travel from valley to valley, as the inhabited strips are inappropriately called, without a guide: for the only indication that the desert has been trodden before, is an occasional cluster of bones, the remains of beasts of burthen that have perished. The sand is frequently raised into immense clouds by the wind, to the great annoyance of the traveller, who generally rides with his face muffled up. The obstacles to moving a body of troops from one point to another, can be appreciated only by military men who have had to contend against them. Description will fall short of conveying even a faint idea of the horrors of the desert. It is not rare for the most experienced guides to lose themselves.



'In that case terror instantly reduces them to a state of insanity.  
'Unless they recover the path by chance, or are fortunate  
'enough to see other travellers loom above the horizon, they  
'inevitably perish, and their fate is no more known than that of  
'a ship which founders at sea. A puff of wind obliterates the  
'footsteps of a column of soldiers.'\*

We now return to Mr. King. We have followed him to the time when the Spanish viceroy was in full possession of this inaccessible country, but threatened with invasion by Bolivar and his Columbians from the north, and by an Argentine army from the south, and Mr. King was on his way to join the latter force.

A journey in South America is a sort of campaign. His corps was stationed in the republic of Salta. His road lay through that of Tucuman. Each of these states claims to be independent, and if mere extent gave a right to self-government would certainly be entitled to it, for the territory of each is greater than that of the British Islands. Both were then, and we believe are still, members of the Argentine confederacy. Both were then at war with Spain and with Brazil,—enemies sufficiently formidable to satisfy any European appetite for danger. But, after the custom of South American confederates, they were at war with one another. And when Mr. King reached the city of Tucuman, he found it preparing to resist an attack from Salta. Though thinking it improper to take part in the defence, he resolved to see the event, and therefore awaited in the city the enemy's approach. The dissipation of this little provincial capital seems for the time to have turned his head. 'Our evenings,' he says, 'were passed at *tertulias de bola* and *tertulias de conversaciones*, (balls and conversational parties,) and I entered into the spirit of their enjoyments with all the eagerness and gusto of one who had been long severed from the cheering influences of civil life. Surrounded with beauty, fashion, and luxury, and with the most distinguished and wealthy for my companions, I went on through the torrent of gaiety with a bewildering sense of happiness, and, for the first time since I had taken arms, looked forward with a feeling of discontent to the moment when I should receive orders to renew our march.' (P. 62.)

Salta is eleven days' journey from Tucuman, so that these gaieties must have taken place while the enemy was actually on his march. They were interrupted by the necessity of making immediate preparation for defence:—

‘Every man and every boy that could hold a firelock was forthwith armed; each house became a fortress; and even upon the tops of the houses preparations were made by which the women could hurl stones and other heavy missiles upon the heads of the enemy. On the next day the enemy approached. The doors of the houses were barricaded, the windows closed, and a fearful silence, broken only by the occasional passing of small bodies of troops, pervaded the whole city. The stillness was awful; every thing that could be done for safety had been done, and the people now only awaited the bursting of the impending storm. I had taken my post at the house of the governor, who was now with his troops; determined to defend that at least, to the last extremity, and, in the event of the dreaded pillage, to protect his family. With a number of his family, I had ascended to the housetop, and from that spot we witnessed the approach of Ouemez\*, with his army, followed by a train of some three hundred carros, provided for the conveyance of booty. His first assault was upon the citadel, which lay in full view before us; but after a short attack he entered the city, driving the garrison like sheep before him.

‘I had seen war in its most sanguine (*sic*) forms—had been through battle after battle, literally wading in blood—yet never till now had my nerves trembled. I saw Ouemez’ strength and preparations, and as he approached, my frame shivered with fear for the helpless and young; yet I strove, with the best effort in my power, to soothe the apprehensions of the females, who were clinging around me.

‘As the enemy entered the town, he was met by fresh troops and militia, who disputed their ground, inch by inch, for a long time, but at last gave way. Carnage followed upon every side: Ouemez’ troops separated, carrying death and havoc through the various streets; and above the uproar of the battle, as they were met by small bands of troops and citizens fighting for their firesides, arose the shrieks of women, and the groaning prayers of the aged.’ (P. 64.)

1. The assailants, however, scattered themselves in the town, were attacked by a reserve, driven out, and pursued with great slaughter. A few days after, Mr. King, on his road to Salta, followed the track of the enemy’s retreat, and found, as he says, ‘the ground literally strewn with the bodies of men, horses, wrecks of carros, and other equipages of the discomfited troops.’ He reached the head-quarters at Humacagua, near the frontier, was detached to an outpost, because, as his general told him, being a foreigner, he could be trusted, and detained there for eight or nine months. At length the revolutionary army resolved to assume the offensive, and Mr. King was made major, and appointed second in command in a body of about 700 cavalry, who were pushed forward in the direction of Potosi, in the hope of exciting an insurrection.

The expedition started from Oran, in the republic of Salta, and its first object was to dislodge a Spanish force stationed in a town which he calls Carriparee in Tarija, the frontier province of Upper Peru. The party, though unincumbered by baggage, and with every motive to speed, appear to have been more than two months on their march. Mr. King states the distance to be about 100 leagues, or 250 miles, so that they cannot have advanced at the rate of much more than four miles a day,—a curious proof of the difficulty of the country. Carriparee was found occupied by a superior force. The events of Tucuman were repeated. The patriots forced their way into the town, the main force of the royalists was dispersed, when the victors were attacked by a reserve, broken, and almost completely destroyed. Mr. King states the number who escaped to have been only twenty-three.

They fled to the forests by which the town is surrounded, and, instead of attempting to retreat to Oran by the direct route, followed the Pilcomayo, which runs in this part of its course nearly due east. This led them through the country of the Chiriviones, one of the least barbarous tribes of the independent Indians. With them the fugitives rested for about three weeks. They could talk a little Spanish, and Mr. King suggested to one of their chiefs the expediency of letting his people be converted and become members of the civilised world. His answer, as translated by Mr. King, showed the impression produced on a bystander by the Spanish and Creole characters. 'Christian! No, no, no. Christian very bad. Christian fight his brother: Chirivione fight his enemy—Chirivione live happy.' (P. 111.) What occurred during their short residence did not raise that character. One of the party, a Peruvian, injured a female of the tribe, and they escaped indiscriminate massacre only by a sudden flight by night. A circuitous journey of about six weeks brought them back to Oran.

Mr. King appears to have been a brave and useful officer. He was well received by the Governor Civilia (probably Cavilla), and immediately obtained the commission of Lieut.-Colonel in a new regiment which the government of Salta was raising to replace that which had been lost at Carriparee. Soon afterwards that regiment was destroyed, as its predecessor had been in one of the predatory expeditions in which the Spanish Americans, like all semi-barbarians, delight. It had been undertaken in his absence, and, indeed, without his sanction. His character, therefore, did not suffer, and a third regiment was given to him with the rank of Colonel; and the command of a division, of what he calls 'the army then forming at San Francisco.' Whether

this was a federal army or one raised by the republic of Salta, in which San Francisco is situated, does not appear.

Col. King had now reached the highest point which he was destined to attain in his military career. After having been employed for some months in disciplining his regiment, an interval of leisure occurred, he left San Francisco to make a tour in the northern part of the state, and, in the course of it, reached Juyjuy, a town about fifty miles from the frontier, charmingly situated on the river of the same name. What happened to him there we will let him tell in his own words.

‘I was at the market-place, with my friend, awaiting the arrival of my servant, and expecting every moment to hear the tinkle of the bell attached to his mule. The sound of a bell at length reached my ear, but I was in earnest conversation and gave it no heed; when suddenly I received a blow from behind, which threw me a little forward, and knocked my *garro*\* into the dirt. I turned to resent the insult, and met the frown of an exasperated friar. He was preceding the *host*, accompanied by his guard, from the musket of one of whom I had received the blow.

‘The procession passed on. I felt that I had committed a crime sufficient to draw a watchful eye towards me, yet trusted that no further note would be taken of the circumstance. It was a vain trust, however; for, in the space of eight hours, I was arrested for contumely towards the holy church, and, without trial or examination of any kind, cast into a loathsome cell.’ (P. 150.)

The Governor did not venture to interfere. After he had been three months in solitary confinement, he was offered freedom if he would embrace Catholicism, or, at least, say that he had embraced it. He refused, but seems to believe that a pious fraud was practised for his benefit; and that his acquiescence was reported to the authorities. All that he knows is, that seventeen days after he was set at liberty, with no further punishment except the confiscation, for the benefit of the church, of all his property in Juyjuy.

He made his way, as well as a penniless man could, back to Oran, found his friend General Civilia deposed by a revolution; his regiment dispersed, and his command at an end. Probably, though Col. King seems not to have known it, the army to which he was attached had been disbanded in consequence of the termination of the war in Upper Peru, which, by this time, had become the independent state of Bolivia. There is something striking in his description of his feelings as he left Oran for the last time, intending to return by way of Buenos Ayres to his own country.

‘As I left the town, I turned back, from a small eminence, to take one farewell look, and was struck with admiration at the magnificence of the scene before me. Almost every house in the town has its orange-garden; some containing ten, twenty, and even fifty trees. The fruit was just ripe, and, from the position which I then occupied, the whole town seemed buried in one perfect mantle of green and gold, waving and flashing in the sunbeams. “Ah!” thought I, “how inviting, how lovely is nature. Here is a country fitted for man’s enjoyment, comparable even with the Eden of creation; yet all is lost, all is absorbed in the vortex of civil war.”’ (P. 161.)

At Salta he was recognised by one of his old soldiers, who, with feelings honourable to both parties, offered to join his fortunes and accompany him as companion or as servant. The sale of his sword enabled him to buy a mule; his companion, Drego, had another, and they proceeded well equipped with every thing except money.

His route led him through Tucuman, Santiago, and Catamarca, to Cordova. At Tucuman he found that his friend, General Arolie, whose heroic defence of the town against Guemez we have related, had been deposed, and publicly shot before the Government House. At Santiago, where he had passed a few days when on his way from St. Juan to Salta, he inquired for an old friend, Don Miguel Savage, a man of letters and science. He, too, had been shot as a conspirator. Colonel King saw his wife in a mad-house. After undergoing at Catamarca an imprisonment, an incident which he rarely escaped in a long journey, he reached Cordova, and found it under the government of his old friend General Bustos (whom he calls Bustes). On his road he had been struck by the uneasy state of the country. Every hamlet was in arms; and squadrons of militia met him every day. Preparation for war seemed to be the employment of the people; but he could not learn the cause of all this excitement. At Cordova it was explained to him. A series of events had begun a few months before, which is still far from terminated, which has for nearly twenty years laid waste the fine regions drained by the Plata, and has extended its mischiefs to Europe, and especially to England. These are so important, and so little understood, that they deserve a short outline.

During the period which we have been describing, the Argentine republics, though, as we have seen, often at war with one another, and little controlled, either by their federal obligations or by their local institutions; though submitting to no central authority, and ruled despotically by their governors, until the same were, from time to time, deposed and shot, yet

in general acknowledged the Buenos Ayres government as the representative towards foreign powers of 'the Republic of the united provinces of the river Plata.' In this capacity the Buenos Ayres government, under the presidency of Don Manuel Dorrego (called by Colonel King Don Dorago), terminated the long war with Brazil, by the treaty of the 27th of August, 1828, — a treaty by which each party renounced its claims on Banda Oriental, and guaranteed the erection of that country into an independent state.

General Lavalle, the commander of the Buenos Ayres army employed in Banda Oriental, belonged to a party opposed to that of Dorrego. On his march homewards, after the peace, he announced his intention of overturning the government: Dorrego, and one of his principal supporters, Don Manuel Rosas, who, as the steward of a great estate belonging to the brothers Anchovena, had considerable influence in the province, fled on his approach, and proceeded to collect a force in the country. Lavalle entered Buenos Ayres on the 1st of December, 1828, proclaimed the existing government to be unworthy of power, and therefore dissolved, and summoned an assembly of the people to elect its successor. In this assembly, held, as all popular assemblies in South America are held, under the bayonets of the army, Lavalle was of course elected governor; and the other posts were filled by his officers and creatures.

In the mean time, the troops collected by Dorrego and Rosas became formidable. Lavalle marched out to meet them, defeated them on the 9th of December, and captured Dorrego; and immediately, and without trial of any kind, ordered him to be shot. 'I wish you,' he said in his despatch to the lieutenant governor of the town, 'to inform the people of Buenos Ayres that the death of Colonel Dorrego was the greatest sacrifice that I could make in their favour.' If Lavalle had had ordinary men to contend with, this victory would have been decisive. The province would have submitted to the apparent will of the capital, and he would have strutted and fretted his months on the political stage, until the next revolution drove him into exile or delivered him to the executioner. But Rosas is no ordinary man. His energy, his sagacity, his perseverance, and above all, his powers of influencing those around him, are of the highest order. He refused to submit to Lavalle, fell back on his friends and dependents in the rural districts, and organised first a faction, and ultimately a real and permanent party.

In a composite state there is always a tendency towards the formation of two great parties — that of those who wish to bind closely under a central government the different communities of

which it is composed, and those who wish to keep them separate and independent. We feel the existence of these parties in the British Islands; we see it in Switzerland, in Italy, and in Anglo-America. The more intelligent part of the people, and the leading men of the highest ambition, generally belong to the centralising party. The uneducated, full of local prejudices, local habits, and local jealousies, and the smaller demagogues, whose desires are satisfied by provincial importance, form the repealers. It was to these feelings that Rosas appealed. He accused Lavalle and his supporters of being Unitarians, that is to say, of desiring to unite the independent Argentine republics into one state, with himself as its dictator. He called himself a federalist; and proclaimed as his object the relative independence of the different states, with a common organ merely for foreign relations, and for defence against foreign invasion. The chiefs on neither side had probably any preference for one of these theories of government as compared with the other, but they served as watchwords to array one party against the other; and in a semi-barbarous society, parties once formed are held together by personal hopes and fears, attachments and habits, and may continue to fight, like the Caravats and the Shanavests of Ireland, long after the original cause of quarrel has ceased. And this has been the case in South America. They pillage, murder, and execute one another as Unitarians and Federalists, without really attaching to those words any meaning, except hatred of those bearing the opposite designation. A curious proof of this is, that Rosas, the professed head of the Federalists, is himself in practice a fierce Unitarian. The only real question between him and Lavalle, or between him and Lavalle's successors, is, who is to be the dictator.

In the beginning of the year 1829 fortune was, on the whole, more favourable to the Federalists. Rosas obtained the command of the country round Buenos Ayres, drove Lavalle into the town, cut off its supplies, and created a feeling of hostility to the Unitarians. Lavalle negotiated with him; and on the 24th of June they made a treaty, by which Lavalle was to remain provisional governor of the city, and Rosas captain general of the country districts, until the people should elect a new government. It was, in fact, a truce and an agreement to share the government during its continuance.

The elections provided for by the treaty of June took place 24 July. They were favourable to the Unitarian party, and Rosas refused to acknowledge their validity. He again blockaded the town, and Lavalle submitted to the following compromise. The elections were annulled, the constitution suspended, and

the supreme power vested in a new governor and a senate of twenty-four persons. Rosas remained commander-in-chief in the country, and Lavalle in the town; but this arrangement was fatal to the influence of the latter. The suspension of the constitution destroyed his popularity, the new governor and the senate turned against him, federalist troops were introduced, and his own seduced or frightened away, and he left Buenos Ayres to Rosas, who has ever since continued its master.

In the meantime, it must have been early this year, while Rosas was blockading Buenos Ayres, that Colonel King entered Cordova. Bustos, the governor, was a Federalist, and while he retained his power the town was Federalist. General Paz, at the head of a Unitarian force, was on his march to attack it. Bustos offered King a command in the Federalist army, which he very properly declined, but remained in Cordova to watch the event.

We copy his account of what followed:—

‘Paz approached with his army, and halted upon a plain about three leagues from the city. Bustos, preparing for his approach, had taken a position on the north side of the town, to which Paz advanced, passing through the town, and went at once into an engagement. The battle was severe, and well fought on both sides. The cannonading was distinctly heard at the city. Couriers were constantly flying to and fro, until at length it was announced that Bustos was beaten, and preparations were immediately made to receive the conqueror in an appropriate and respectful manner. Wreaths were prepared, triumphal arches erected, sonnets and addresses in praise of the victorious general were written and conned. On the following day, General Paz entered the town at the head of about fifteen hundred men, and his army became at once the object of universal admiration.’ (P. 221.)

This took place on the 22nd of April, 1829, and Paz appears to have remained undisturbed master of Cordova for at least a year.

During this interval, he prepared for the coming struggle, induced Tucuman, Salta, and some minor republics, to join the Unitarian faction, and became a rival to Rosas, whom it was not safe to neglect. In the beginning of 1830 Rosas sent against him an expedition under the command of General Quiroga. The peasantry seem to have been generally favourable to the Federalist party. Quiroga penetrated, with little opposition, to the immediate neighbourhood of the town.

Colonel King is a fine battle painter, and we will complete our gallery by his picture of the battle of Cordova.

‘Quiroga at length approached, and Paz moved with his whole army to the *sablada*, a large plain about two miles from the city, and



in full view from the tops of the houses. With several others, all well armed, I had taken a position upon the house of one of the state officers, not far from the entrance of the town in the direction of the scene of action; and from this position we witnessed the approach of the enemy's forces, and the position occupied by Paz. At about three-fourths of a mile from that spot, Quiroga halted, for the purpose of forming his infantry; and here it is necessary to explain the practice of that country in the transportation of that arm of their service. The armies of the Argentine are composed mostly of cavalry, yet no general forms an entire corps without having a small corps of infantry attached; and as their field of operation often extends over an area of some hundred leagues, the infantry, for the convenience of rapid transportation, are mounted behind the men composing the cavalry, each horse, so far as the number of the infantry may require, thus "carrying double." When about to go into an engagement, the infantry dismount, and are formed after the manner of their own tactics.

Quiroga, as I have stated, dismounted his infantry, formed his column at about three-fourths of a mile from Paz, and advanced to the engagement, commencing his deployment at a distance of about half a mile, and presenting the whole force of his cavalry. Paz had every advantage, except that of numbers. Independent of his cavalry and infantry (among whom was a small battalion of negroes, under the command of an Englishman named Wild), he had a small corps of artillery. His men and horses were fresh and well disciplined; and he had chosen his position on a gentle slope or rise of the *tablada*. His infantry, numbering about 1000, were drawn up in front, flanked on the right and left by the artillery. About two hundred paces in their rear was a line of cavalry, numbering about 2500, and at a distance of the eighth of a mile in rear of this line, was a handsome cavalry reserve of 500 men. The excitement which this scene created in my breast was almost overpowering. I could scarce resist the impulse that prompted me to go forth; but I had taken neutral ground, and besides this, I had united with others to fight only for our friends in the last extremity: those who had remained in town were regarded by their wives, mothers, and children, as their final hope, and it was for their protection that we remained.

At about three o'clock P.M. the action was commenced by Paz, who set his artillery at play upon Quiroga's column, at the moment that he began his deployment. Its effect was visible; and before the deployment was fairly completed, his right began a rapid movement, evidently intended as a charge upon the infantry. By the haste of his movement, his lines were already thrown into some disorder; and as his right approached, they were met by a volley from the infantry which turned their direction, carrying slaughter in their ranks, and the succeeding squadrons pressed on under a cross-fire from the artillery. The second assault was met like the first by the infantry, who, to all appearance, had not yet lost a man, and who stood their ground like statues of marble. In the distance, we could see of them only a long dark line, seemingly almost without motion; and ever and anon, as

that line was approached with the threatening aspect of attack, the glitter of their arms was for an instant seen as they levelled their muskets, then shrouded in the smoke of the discharge. Beyond the volume of smoke we could distinctly see its effects. Confusion was apparent, and the horses, wounded by successive volleys, refused to advance again. Quiroga's infantry had by this time deployed its column in rear of their cavalry, and their general had evidently determined to unmask them, and endeavour at the same time to pass the flanks of Paz's infantry, thus throwing his whole force of about 4000 cavalry upon his enemy's second line. So it proved; but Paz had anticipated the movement, and was prepared to receive him. In one hour from the commencement the battle became general; infantry were engaged with infantry, aided on our side by the artillery; cavalry with cavalry, and the whole mass became so commingled and shrouded in smoke and dust, that it was impossible to discriminate between the parties. For a long time Paz's reserve remained immovable, but at last we saw them dash into the conflict. It was a moment of intense excitement with us all; shouts and cheers ascended from the housetops in every quarter, as though our fighting friends could hear their encouraging tones.

None could form the slightest opinion upon the chances of success, and, unable at last to bear the excitement and suspense, about twenty of us determined to go to the scene of action, yet without any direct object, except it was to quell the fever of anxiety. Passing hastily from the town, we ran towards the *tablada*, the roar of the battle growing louder and louder as we approached. Both armies had broken into detachments, and the men were fighting on all hands like bloodhounds. We saw Quiroga; he had thrown off every vestige of his clothing save his drawers, which were rolled up, and fastened about his thighs. Both he and his horse were covered with blood, and altogether they presented an appearance that could be compared to nothing human. Goaded with the prospect of defeat, he dashed from place to place, cutting down with his own sword such of his troops as quailed or turned for their lives, and leading detachments into the hottest of the fight. Naked as he was, and streaming with the gore that had spurted from his victims upon him, he seemed a very devil presiding over carnage. His troops had already commenced their flight, and were rushing in small bands from the battle in every direction; some halting, and at an auspicious moment, dashing again into the fray; some resting, and others again flying for their lives. In this manner our little party of neutrals became entangled in the mass of moving detachments, and at one time we were compelled to fight our own way out. But at sunset the battle was decided. Paz was victorious, and Quiroga fled without a signal of retreat.' (P. 268.)

If this description be a true one, and it has all the detail and distinctness of truth, the South Americans must be capable of making excellent soldiers—notwithstanding all appearances in Mexico to the contrary. Both the attack and the defence

seem to have been admirable. The cavalry continued to charge until their horses refused to advance. The infantry withstood them with a coolness which would have done honour to our squares at Waterloo. Both parties displayed not merely the indifference to danger, which we have already remarked, as characteristic of the inhabitants of the Pampas, but the steadiness, which is the highest result of discipline.

When it is recollected that we have now been for nearly six years at war or at half-war with the government of Buenos Ayres, and that every year of that strange quarrel has tended to prolong it, it is of great importance that we should estimate correctly the military force of our opponent. And this has been one of our motives for calling attention to Colonel King's book. Forty years ago we paid most dearly for our ignorance. We believed the Spanish Americans to be a timid defenceless race, attacked Buenos Ayres unexpectedly, and entered it, after what General Beresford called 'a very feeble opposition.\*' Six weeks after, the native forces had retaken Buenos Ayres, and General Beresford was a prisoner with all that remained of his garrison.

The next year we renewed the attack with a force of between 9000 and 10,000 men; the largest and the best appointed and disciplined army that South America has ever seen. Our soldiers entered the town, for it was open, and were destroyed from the houses. And again we had to abandon Buenos Ayres, with only this difference, that our surviving troops left it not as prisoners, but under the protection of a capitulation. Those defeats we received from the population of a country in which war had not been seen for 300 years. Since that time that unhappy country has never seen peace. It probably has not now a male inhabitant who has not been trained to danger and to discipline. Again, in the contests to which we have alluded, infantry was opposed to infantry. The scene of the battle was chosen by ourselves, and it was preceded by little manœuvring. The conditions were as favourable to an invading force as they could be. The difficulties of South American warfare will not be known, or, at least, will not be experienced, until an European force attempts, not a mere descent and attack on a town, but a real campaign in the Pampas. — Until it has to contend with armies of the best horsemen in the world, carrying their infantry *en croupe*, driving thousands of spare horses at their flanks, and performing marches of fifty or sixty, or even seventy miles in twenty-four

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\* See his dispatch of July 2. 1806.

hours. Such armies it will be impossible to pursue, impossible to avoid, and not very easy to resist. It will be a repetition of the war between Rome and Parthia. If England and France, or both united, ashamed of being played with and deceived and foiled by a barbarian, tired of witnessing from the blockading squadron nothing but the tyranny of Rosas and proofs of their own inefficiency, should attempt to change this little war into a serious one, we expect calamities not perhaps as frightful as those of Cabul, or as interminable as those of Algiers, but serious enough to spoil a budget, perhaps to overthrow a ministry. Where a Kaffir war costs one million, an Argentine one will cost five.

After his defeat before Cordova, Quiroga retired to Catamarca, collected a fresh body of troops, again attacked Cordova, and was again repulsed, this time with great slaughter; and Colonel King believes, that if Paz had advanced on Santa Fe and Buenos Ayres, the only provinces which now remained federalist, the Unitarian party would have triumphed. He remained, however, at Cordova, in military inactivity, and amused himself with summoning an Unitarian congress at Cordova, and notifying to the foreign ministers at Buenos Ayres, that the government residing in that city did not represent the interior provinces. In the beginning of the next year, 1831, Lavalle made an attempt to re-enter Buenos Ayres, but was defeated, and his army dispersed. Rosas, with his usual energy, resumed the offensive. He raised an army of nearly 9000 men, a great force for that country, and directed the main body on Cordova. General Paz advanced to meet it, and Colonel King was confident of success. But while reconnoitring with only two followers, General Paz came across an enemy's patrol; a ball-lasso broke his horse's leg, and he was taken. His army, under La Madrid, the second in command, retreated, first to Cordova, and afterwards to Tucuman. Quiroga followed him with a superior force.

'And here,' (says Col. King) 'a singular feature in the warfare of these provinces was strongly illustrated. I allude to the fact that when opposing armies come in contact, such a thing as capitulation without a fight is seldom thought of, no matter what may be the disparity of numbers or position. The position of La Madrid was isolated in every respect; he was cut off not only from succour, but from all hope of succour; he knew that he was the last Unitarian in the field, and that the power of Quiroga was at least treble his own; still he determined to fight it out.

'Quiroga met him at the citadel, where a bloody engagement took place, but, overwhelmed with numbers, the garrison at last gave way and fled to the town. There the contest was renewed with vigour

and desperation, but all their efforts at defence were useless; the hordes of Quiroga were powerful, and, having tasted blood, seemed more furious than ever; the squadrons of the last Unitarian commander were broken, and driven from the city; and their leader, with such of his force as escaped, fled in small bands through bye-ways across the province of Salta, and thence escaped into Bolivia.' (P. 302.)

Immediately after the battle 500 of the prisoners were shot, and this, perhaps, accounts for what excites Colonel King's surprise, their not capitulating. Capitulation is being put to death as soon as the enemy is at leisure.

From that time until now, Rosas has maintained himself as dictator of Buenos Ayres, and absolute manager of the foreign relations of the Argentine confederation. That in the former capacity he has been a merciless tyrant, is, we fear, true. But in apportioning the blame which he has deserved, the character of the people whom he has had to govern must not be forgotten. Sir Francis Head is, we doubt not, a humane rider of a well broken hack, but he admits that he left the sides of many a wild Pampanero streaming with blood. In his foreign relations, Rosas appears to us, as far as our information extends, as much sinned against as sinning. We trust that papers will soon be laid before Parliament, which will fully explain the motives which have induced England to interfere in the affairs of two independent communities, separated from her by nearly half the globe; and to employ her vast naval superiority in blockading the ports, and destroying the trade of one of her surest and most improving customers. We hope too, that these papers will go far enough back. Unless they show the nature of the original matter of dispute between Rosas and France; how France, in order to obtain the aid of Banda Oriental, against Rosas, expelled from Monte Video his friend Oribe; and, when, in 1840, she was arming against England, abandoned to Rosas those whom she had seduced to rise against him; how, when her fears of England subsided, she renewed her hostility to Rosas, and under circumstances unknown to the public, drew England into the quarrel.—Unless, we repeat, all this is shown, no sound judgment can be passed on the acts which we have done, or on the measures now to be adopted to remedy the mischief of those acts. And for this purpose the narrative must go back for ten years. We have, indeed, already a considerable amount of information as to the conduct of France; and we do not recollect a more revolting instance of the insolent oppression with which she treats every nation on which she can safely trample. Even if our own acts shall appear to be justifiable, they can scarcely

escape from being tainted by our concurrence, even if it appear to have been ignorant or involuntary, in her violence, fraud, and chicanery.

We ought to have stated, in its proper place, that during the government of General Paz, Colonel King married a lady of Cordova; a marriage by which he says that he was immediately transported from a state little removed from absolute poverty to one of luxury and wealth. He retired from the army, but remained in the country, with one interval of absence, until 1841, when, having lost his wife, he returned to the United States.

With the description, which we have extracted, of the battle between Quiroga and La Madrid, with which the contest between the Unitarians and Federalists ended, ends also the interest and value of Colonel King's book. What remains is chiefly occupied by stories about the cruelties of Rosas. Such a subject cannot be made attractive even by the most skilful management. Colonel King has tried to adorn it by long details of conversations obviously imaginary, since no third person was present. His work, as we have it, consists of twenty-six chapters. It would be much improved if all that follow the eighteenth were omitted. We should then have left a curious and instructive picture of anarchical society—of the state into which every people is likely to fall, which throws off the government under which it has grown up, without possessing the habits which enable it to create a substitute, or even to submit to one. As is South America now, so would Ireland be after repeal;—so would have been Greece if she had not been pressed together by the powerful states which control her.

ART. XI. — 1. *Le National*. Paris: 1832—1848.

2. *Histoire de Dix Ans*, 1830—1840: Par M. LOUIS BLANC.

3. *Lamartine: Histoire des Girondins*. Paris: 1847.

SINCE the publication of our last Number a revolution of the most extraordinary character has changed the political aspect of Europe. France is again a Republic. At a day's notice, and by a course of events which could have astounded no one more than the parties most intimately concerned, the dynasty of Orleans has been terminated; and the whole powers of government are at this moment provisionally lodged in the hands of an extempore council. The incidents of this momentous revolution have succeeded each other with such wonderful rapidity, that little time has been allowed for reflection or judgment; but as

it is impossible to pass over in silence such prodigious events, we offer our readers what must necessarily be a hasty and imperfect sketch of the party so unexpectedly thrown to the surface of the seething waters, and will endeavour, with such materials as a continuous observation of French politics has supplied, to construct a story which, we trust, may leave the revolution of February a little more intelligible than it is probably found at present.

The first intelligence must have struck every one with the extraordinary contrast it presented between the characters of the agitation and the catastrophe. On the 22nd of February the contending parties were the dynastic opposition and the ministry; on the 24th of February the ministry and opposition had vanished together. The only ostensible object of contention was electoral reform; and the question, to all appearance, was turning on the interpretation to be put upon the law against associations; M. Guizot being the champion of one party, and M. Odillon Barrot of the other. But the result of the conflict was that elections, electors, and laws were all swept aside at once, and that M. Odillon Barrot and Guizot disappear at the same moment. It is as if the invitation to William of Orange had issued in the establishment of the Fifth Monarchy men, instead of the Bill of Rights. A third party, unsuspected by the others, and probably itself unconscious of any such power as it has actually displayed, stepped suddenly upon the scene; displaced all the other actors, and now holds undisputed possession of the stage. It is this party of which we wish, briefly and hurriedly, to sketch the growth, character, and opinions; in the hopes that the information thus incidentally conveyed may assist towards a better understanding of the present, and a safer anticipation of the future.

The existing Republican party in France was engendered by the revolution of July, 1830. We shall notice hereafter the various stages of development by which it gradually assumed an affinity with the parties of 1789 and 1793; but it is certain that it was not derived by any continuous tradition or descent from the factions of those famous periods. Nor can the *Charbonnerie* of the Restoration be described as either furnishing any connecting link between them, or as having originated the party which is now so strangely triumphant. The principle of *Charbonnerie*, as modified in its introduction from Italy into France, was conveyed in the following proposition: that inasmuch as the Bourbons had been forced upon the French nation by foreign powers, the *Charbonniers* would combine to restore to France her free choice of government. Considerable latitude of opinion

was of course permitted by such a principle of association as this; but it was to the restoration of the Imperial rather than the Republican *régime* that the desires of the members then chiefly pointed; nor is there any doubt that the current of popular feeling ran in the same direction when agitated by the successful insurrections of July. It appears to us, however, that considerable misconception has prevailed respecting the extent to which the people were defrauded of the fruits of their victory on those three celebrated days. It has been the fashion to describe the *bourgeoisie* as having wrested from the wearied combatants the prize of their triumph, and converted the conquest which should have secured the rights of the people, into an instrument for establishing and securing their own political predominance. But the revolution of July, unlike that of February, was undertaken for a specified object, and it was this specified object which was secured by its success. It was, in truth, the *bourgeoisie*, not the people, (to use the terms so conventionally distinctive\*), who then felt their liberties menaced; it was the same body, and not the people, who actually commenced the insurrection; and if the latter promptly joined in it, and ultimately conducted it to a triumphant issue, it was without any view to peculiar objects or interests of their own. The real movement was for the Charter, and the Charter was saved. There was then no party in the streets fighting for a Republic. It is true that in the excitement of a week's interregnum ideas speedily sprung up that the new constitution might as well be dictated at the Hotel de Ville as at the Hotel Lafitte; and it is from this period and those circumstances that the descent of the present republicans must be traced. But there was cer-

\* Perhaps it may be worth while to transcribe the definition of these terms as laid down in the latest *résumé* of the writer who has most perseveringly worked out the contrast between the parties alluded to:—

‘La *bourgeoisie* est l’ensemble des citoyens qui, possédant des instruments de travail ou un capital, peuvent, sans s’asservir, développer leurs facultés, et ne dépendent d’autrui que dans une certaine mesure.

‘Le *peuple* est l’ensemble des citoyens qui, ne possédant pas les instruments de travail, ne trouvent pas en eux-mêmes leurs moyens de développement, et dépendent d’autrui en ce qui touche aux premières nécessités de la vie.

‘Ils sont du peuple, par conséquent, quels que soient leur savoir, leur éducation, leurs relations sociales, tous ceux qui ne sont pas assurés de leur nourriture, de leur vêtement et de leur gîte.’—*Conclusion Historique* to M. Louis Blanc’s History.



tainly no ready-formed or cognisable party of this character which could make any pretensions to the fruits of that revolution. A sudden and hasty meeting of a few enthusiasts, without any fixed principles, any previous organisation, or any definite plans, is all the demonstration which appears. The people themselves knew far less of them than they did of the *bourgeoisie*; and power could only have been transferred to their hands by a most preposterous accident or a most unnatural experiment.

No sooner, however, was the new dynasty settled on the throne than the ideas which had been engendered during this short abeyance of power began to take root and flourish. In proportion as men compared more carefully what they had obtained with what it seemed to them they might have obtained, was their disaffection increased at the thoughts of the chance they had lost; and they at length began to conceive themselves defrauded of a prize which might indeed have been within their reach, but for which in reality they had never contended. Hence arose the Republican party. It derived strength, no doubt, from the disappointments created by the policy of the new *régime*, and it might perhaps have been stifled in its infancy had the government deprived it of its pretexts by an honest and liberal exercise of the principles on which it had been founded. But essentially it had no reference to the merits or demerits of the Citizen King. It was composed of men whose spirits had never settled into quietude since the three days' fermentation, and who had persuaded themselves, too late, that a republican form of government was that which alone was fitted for France, and which they had unhappily missed. Beyond this naked conception their ideas, at this time, scarcely extended; it will be our duty presently to show into what they grew. But although with such indefinite and ill-inaturred views, although without any support among the powerful or the experienced, although represented merely by a handful of hot-brained enthusiasts, yet the Republican party was within a few months deemed considerable enough to deserve the surveillance of the government, and had resolutely chalked out a course of action for itself. Already at the trial of the ex-ministers they were prepared for the possibility of a demonstration, and by way of concentrating and economising their inferior forces, they had taken the precaution to enrol themselves exclusively in the artillery of the national guard, instead of dispersing themselves throughout the ranks of the legions. Of the four batteries composing this important arm of the force, the second was under the command of M.M. Guinard and Cavaignac, and the third of M.M. Bastide

and Thomas. We shall take some pains throughout, in specifying names; inasmuch as the several parties who will be thus traced through these scenes are precisely those most conspicuous just now, and indeed every single member of the present provisional government figures prominently in the rise and progress of the party.

Under the fortunate circumstances of our own country and our own generation, it is not very easy for an Englishman to comprehend fully a state of society where the success or discomfiture of certain political opinions implies a complete revolution in the government, and a total subversion of society. We can scarcely realise such a condition of things, even at that critical moment in the reign of our Queen Anne, when it is related that the leaders of both Houses considered the recall of the Stuarts and the repeal of the Act of Settlement as open questions. But this unsettled period was very brief, and, moreover, no one thought of anticipating the natural vacancy of the throne. In France there were three parties, the Legitimists, the Bonapartists, and the Republicans, each conceiving itself as justly entitled to power as the fourth party, which actually possessed it; each also bent on seizing it by violence at the first opportunity; and each prepared, without the least scruple, to revolutionise the kingdom as soon as its object was gained. The party with which we are at present concerned was originally the weakest of the four; but it soon gathered strength enough to outstrip at least two of its competitors, and finally, as events have proved, the third. Its tactics were characteristic and remarkable. Convinced that no one of the factions was strong enough of itself to initiate or conduct an insurrection against the established government, its strategy consisted in keeping its own associates in a compact and resolute body, in watching for any one of those thousand incidents which might call the forces of the faubourgs into the streets, in seconding and following up the movement, in supplying arms and leaders to the populace, and preparing itself to make a better use than it had done in July of any such chances as might occur. This policy was subsequently modified, as we shall see, into something more pacific; but it is impossible to avoid reflecting on the strange course of events by which these original tactics of the party have been crowned with a most miraculous success, after long disuse, and at a period when almost every hope of such a triumph had been reluctantly discarded.

One of the chief aids to the rise of the Republican party was found in the number and influence of the political and professedly economical clubs. These societies, it is true, had been established

with different and sometimes conflicting objects; but, though each pursued its own special purpose of redress or reform, their operations all infallibly tended to the propagation of republican principles. The old *Société Aide-toi*, so famous under the Restoration, after losing M. Guizot and his immediate friends, who had attached themselves to the new dynasty, had been made almost purely republican by the activity of M. Garnier Pagès. And in the excitement of the Revolution had been originated a numerous cluster of new clubs, some of which differed but little from the true Jacobin model. It was in these assemblies that political and social questions were discussed with that freedom and enthusiasm which subsequently generated so many strange principles and elicited so many strange projects, and it was by the organisation which they rendered practicable that such concert and vigour was given to demonstrations which would otherwise have been insignificant. Some of them even openly prescribed among their rules the possession by each member of a musket and a given number of cartridges, and directed a periodical exercise in the use of the weapon. The *Société des Amis du Peuple* had actually despatched a battalion to the aid of the Belgian insurgents armed and equipped at its own expense.

Nine months of possession had apparently confirmed the dynasty of Orleans on the throne, when the fierce and uncontrollable temper of Casimir Perier gave the Republicans an opportunity of making the first public demonstration of their principles and their strength. Trélat, Cavaignac, and Guinard were accused of having conspired, on the occasion of the 'ex-ministers' trial, to 'substitute violently a republic for a monarchy,' and were brought upon such charge before the Court of Assize, sixteen other citizens appearing with them. They were attended by their advocates, among whom was M. Marie, and by a large concourse of friends; and on this occasion they commenced that singular practice, which the habits of French courts facilitate, and which they subsequently continued with such remarkable effect. Instead of defending themselves, they attacked; with the utmost hardihood and ingenuity they availed themselves of the contradictions afforded by the creatures of a revolution sitting in judgment on revolutionists; they loudly avowed their profession and confessed their hopes; and turned the privilege of defence into an occasion for expounding and defending their principles and views to an edified and sympathising audience. It is from the reports and comments upon these successive trials, as given in the republican journals of the day, that some of the best information may be collected respecting the opinions and prospects of the party at successive stages of its

progress. Nothing, to English eyes, can seem more preposterous than such a prostitution of a court of justice; but there is no doubt that in France these expositions were highly serviceable to the cause, and that though the humanity of the laws left no chance to the republicans of becoming martyrs, the prosecutions furnished them with ample opportunities of making converts. The Court of Peers, it will be remembered, upon the trial of the insurgents of Lyons, adopted effectual measures for precluding what could by no stretch of indulgence be called a defence.\* It was perfectly well known that the advocates for the prisoners, instead of extenuating or denying the guilt of their clients, would have called up the bleeding spectre of Michel Ney, would have charged the whole chamber with murder and treason, and would have compared the purity of republican principles with those which dictated that fatal deed. The court obviated the difficulty by limiting the choice of counsel to certain ranks of the profession; but our readers can hardly have forgotten the scenes of tumult which ensued. On the present occasion, however, the republicans were acquitted, and carried in triumphal procession to their homes. Not long after, too, the minister was obliged to yield to demonstrations from the same quarter on the subject of the decoration of July, and the party acquired no inconsiderable strength from this their first essay of resistance and propagandism.

The first insurrection of Lyons, in the autumn of 1831, had no political character. Its circumstances furnished the republicans with opportune arguments and illustrations for the new Social systems to which they soon began to direct their attention; but it was not stimulated by their intrigues, or assisted by their agency; and even the abortive attempt to give a political consequence to the success which at first crowned the efforts of the workmen was apparently the result of some accidental impulse. But a more serious explosion was at hand. The year 1832 opened with some promise for the party. The *National*—a journal originally established in the special interests

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\* Reporting this famous process, the historian says that 'the accused waited with impatience for establishing in the face of the world'—what does the reader suppose—their innocence? No!—'*la supériorité de leurs doctrines!*' With this view the *briefs* given to the advocates who were to have conducted the defence contained a distribution of political and social topics which were to be studied and expounded, and the prisoners divided amongst themselves the several branches of government, philosophy, religion, fine arts, &c., in order that each might contribute his quota of dissertation for the defence. See Louis Blanc, iv. 388.

of the House of Orleans—at length pronounced itself boldly for a republic; and under the vigorous direction of Armand Carrel its influence was speedily felt throughout the kingdom. At the same period, too, M. Garnier Pagès entered the Chamber of Deputies as an avowed republican; and he was followed shortly after by others, who soon supplied a cognisable, though not very important, element in the constitution of the house. But though the few republican deputies joined the dynastic opposition in the publication of their famous *compte rendu* in the following May, yet there was no fusion of opinion between them, nor was it until a much later period that the party whose progress we are tracing betook itself to pacific measures for attaining its object. Their hopes still rested on the chances of war; and the tragical scene of the Cloître St. Mery soon exemplified their tactics, displayed their hardihood, and exposed their prospects and their strength.

It is impossible to imagine anything more characteristic of the condition of France and the position of parties at that period, than the rehearsal of a revolution which this episode supplied. A soldier was going to be buried. He had not been the victim of any persecution, nor was there danger of any principles dying with him. He was popular and distinguished, it is true, but his distinctions were legitimate, and his popularity almost universal. There was no expectation that the government would circumscribe the procession, or interfere with the ceremony. There was no special grievance operating on the people, nor was there any reason whatever why the affair should have been a signal for a party gathering, or anything more than a becoming and attractive show. Yet the simple prospect of a crowd and a tumult was sufficient. Republicans, legitimists, and imperialists mustered each their forces, shouldered their fusils, sharpened their swords, and descended deliberately into the streets, for the chance of subverting and seizing a government in a possible *melee*. It was the game on which all parties alike were calculating in France—a turn-out and a scramble; and if anything can be more strange than the speculation, it would be the fact that it almost actually succeeded. For more than twelve hours a portion of Paris was in the possession of the republicans; it was said that the royal family was meditating flight, and it has been argued with a probability to which recent events give a signal confirmation, that if a Provisional Government had been proclaimed on the 6th of June, 1832, the Crown of 1830 would have again reverted to the people. The republican historian of the times is so struck with the narrowness of the chance by which the game of his party was missed, that he

speculates in a spirit of optimism on the probable consequences of a victory, and enumerates the duties and the prospects of such a government as might possibly have arisen in a dissertation which will furnish very opportune materials for considering the identical conjuncture which has now actually arrived.

It will be readily imagined that a disappointment of such a character as this did not operate greatly to the discomfiture of the party. The clubs redoubled their activity, and acted with augmented strength and energy upon the excitable population. From the side of the *Amis du Peuple* there sprang the celebrated *Société des Droits de l'Homme*, which already numbered some 3000 'orators or combatants' in Paris alone, and which by its affiliations exercised considerable influence in the eastern and south-eastern provinces. It was a pure republican league. Towards the beginning of 1834 it was despatching its instructions to all quarters, making purchases of muskets, fabricating cartridges, and entering into a certain *rapprochement* with the garrisons of Versailles and Vincennes. Everything foreboded another demonstration. The miscarriage of Mazzini's expedition into Savoy had exasperated the republican spirits, and had strengthened the government by showing how little encouragement its opponents could expect from without. At the same time the authorities were fully aware of the progress which the party was making, and of its resolution to measure its force on the first opportunity. It was under such circumstances that the second and more serious insurrection of Lyons broke out in April, 1834. No attempt is made to disguise the fact that, though a premature and ill-concerted explosion, it was in reality a deliberate revolt of the Republican party against the government. It is even said that the government had intrigued by its secret agents to precipitate the catastrophe; from a consciousness that each day was adding strength to its adversaries, and from a persuasion that Lyons, at the moment, presented a more favourable battle-field than they would probably find hereafter. There is no need to dwell upon the well-known incidents of this insurrection, or upon the abortive diversions which were attempted in other quarters at the same moment. The policy of the government, if really such as has been alleged, was entirely successful. The Republican party was beaten at its own weapons. Its most active leaders, including MM. Albert, Guinard, Cavaignac, and Marrast, were under arrest, and the government felt itself strong enough, upon their trial, to adopt those measures for curtailing the licence of defence to which we have before alluded. A strong demonstration, however, of sympathy and support was made. Though advocates chosen by the prisoners

were rejected by the court, they published their sentiments in a vehement address, amongst the signatures to which appear those of Arago, Barbès, Bastide, Carnot, Garnier Pagès, Flocon, and Ledru-Rollin. It was to no purpose, however, that the sympathisers protested or the prisoners refused to plead: the government carried its point, and the Republicans had but feeble success even in rendering its triumph invidious.

Hitherto the description we have given of the proceedings of this party must have resembled, in the reader's eyes, rather the narrative of some inveterate conspiracy, than the details of a political struggle. But, in this respect, it did but correspond with the character of the parties around it. Legitimists and Imperialists acted in the same way in La Vendée and the Lower Rhine; nor could such a course of conduct well appear either extravagant or hopeless, in a country where the dominant party had risen by similar means. But the time was now at hand when the Republicans were to forego the open use of such tactics for a more pacific or patient policy. With the scenes which we have been describing, concludes the turbulent chapter of their career. It is true that the *émeute* of 1839 originated in a republican club, and, also, that it has been identified by the now triumphant party as a manifestation of their own. While we write, the Committee of National Recompences, under the presidency of M. Albert \*, has issued a

\* Considerable interest was excited by the appearance, in the first list of the Provisional Government, of the name of 'Albert, *ouvrier*;' and it was imagined that an operative had been taken into the new administration, to define at once its policy, and to conciliate the party who had obtained such a summary recognition. We are informed, however, that this *soi-disant ouvrier* is no *ouvrier* at all, beyond having been at one time manager in a manufactory of machinery, but that he is the identical M. Albert who figures prominently in republican history; who aided to hatch the insurrection at Lyons in 1834; who lent 'his fortune' to the establishment of a republican journal (*La Glaneuse*) in that city; who was the ambassador between Lyons and Paris; who surrendered himself to share the arrest of his friends; and who answered the interrogations of the judges with 'calm and dignified contempt.'

M. Flocon, whose name we mentioned just above, is, we believe, the individual who figured in those extraordinary scenes of rivalry to which party feeling gave rise in 1833. Twelve journalists of the republican party challenged twelve journalists of the legitimist party to mortal combat — M. Marrast being one of the former list of champions. When these methods of settlement proved unsuccessful, and the Legitimists still held their reunions in the face of day, the Re-

decree, in which, after the enumeration of the several insurrections above described, this disturbance of 1839 is also included as entitling its actors to a national reward. But this mischievous piece of folly was not supported or sanctioned by any general consent of the party at the moment, and it was seldom spoken of afterwards, even by themselves, in any terms but those of regret. The truth is, that the Republicans had received a serious lesson. They had lost their ordinary confidence in *coups de main*. Within the last two years they had been twice fairly beaten in the streets; and the almost total disappearance, in the moment of action, of the enormous Parisian force on which they had reckoned to support the movement at Lyons, had taught them to place less reliance on the sectional returns of a club. It was alleged, too, though the statement, it must be remembered, is upon their own authority, that the better spirits of the party were dissatisfied with the characters of some who had found admission into its ranks, and that such a momentary dissolution of unity as the late catastrophe had caused, was absolutely requisite to facilitate a reorganisation of the whole party on purer principles and with a more reasonable code.

However this may be, it is certain that we meet with no more such explosions of violence as those we have been relating; and at length, after an interval which may have been devoted to the lessons of reflection, the Republicans appear again on the political stage, in a less exceptionable character. We have mentioned the entrance of M. Garnier Pagès into the Chamber of Deputies, and remarked that he was followed by one or two members of similar principles. In the elections, however, of June, 1834, which followed so closely on the scenes at Lyons, the Republican party suffered the usual consequences of a recent discomfiture, and lost ground considerably. But towards the end of 1837, an opportunity was conceived to offer itself for entering the electoral lists under more favourable conditions. M. Molé had dissolved the Chamber, and the people were thought inclined to a change. It was determined to make overtures to the dynastic opposition and to try whether a coalition between the Republicans and the followers of M. Odillon Barrot might not at least succeed in removing those who were the common adversaries of both. M. Dupont and Louis

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publicans issued a proclamation, stating that since the established government could not preserve the nation from such an outrage on its feelings, *they* (the republican party) would disperse the next legitimist meeting *by force*. This singular document was signed by M. Ferdinand Flocon.



Blanc were intrusted with the conduct of the mission, and after some preliminaries a conference was held at the office of the *Nouvelle Minerve*. The discussion was hot. The Republicans absolutely refused any compromise or concession, and proposed simply that the parties should unite their forces without interchanging their banners. At length, though not without reluctance, the Opposition assented, and the celebrated Central Electoral Committee was formed. It proved to be almost purely republican in its composition, including among its members the following names, which the events of the last month have made familiar to almost every English reader:—Dupont (de l'Eure), Arago, Garnier Pages, and Cormenin, members of the last Chamber: Louis Blanc, *redacteur en chef du Bon Sens*; Thomas, *redacteur en chef du National* (now the post of M. Marrast); Goudchaux, *banquier*; Marie, *avocat*; and Ledru Rollin, *avocat*. Two names the reader will probably miss—those of M. Odillon Barrot, the Oppositionist, and M. de Lamartine, the Republican. The first civilly declined, at the outset, any amalgamation with the Republican party; the second discarded the shifty expedient of a coalition, and with that uncertainty of purpose which enters somewhat largely into his character, actually, at last, defended the government attacked. With this union of force, however, the parties commenced their operations, and with no inconsiderable success. All the members, of the coalition were re-elected to their seats, and two well-known republicans—M. Martin (de Strasbourg), and M. Michel (de Bourges), swelled the number of the party. Seven daily journals, conducted with unusual vigour, supplied them with that influence so powerful in France, and it was conceived that they had now a hold upon public opinion really stronger than they had ever previously enjoyed. 'For the first time,' says their chosen historiographer, 'the Republicans could now attempt to seize the helm, without first creating a storm.' And thus, while the *centre gauche* and the *doctrinaires* were busying themselves about the best means of superseding the mediocrities of the Molé Ministry, the *gauche* and the Republicans were uniting their forces for an effort, which the latter at least hoped might end in banishing monarchy from France. The English reader may smile at the professed employment of constitutional means for the pursuit of such an object as this: but one section, and that perhaps the worthiest, of the Legitimist party, were practising a similar policy with equal candour. While M. Arago and the *National* were openly contending for a Republic, the *Gazette de France* and M. de Chateaubriand were as openly advocating the claims of Henry V.; so that under an established and re-

cognised Government two parties, peacefully, and lawfully in their own opinions, were urging on the consideration of the country two propositions, either of which would involve a revolution in politics and the expulsion of the dynasty on the throne. The very history by Louis Blanc, if the date of its publication be compared with its contents and its purpose, is a miraculous testimony to this extraordinary state of France. It is Burnet writing in 1686.

We have thus brought these Republicans to a point in their progress where their principles, if they still survive in undiminished vigour, at least give less abrupt and startling evidence of their vitality. It is true that they do not exert any conspicuous influence on parliamentary combats, but there certainly is no return to the old tactics of insurrection and violence. The *émeute* of 1839 was, as we have said, discountenanced by the bulk of the party, and utterly unsupported by even that unthinking People on whose concert they had been accustomed to count. More peaceful, but, perhaps, not less effective methods of propagandism were now adopted. Whether the party, at this period, gained materially in numbers, or extended its influence more generally over the population, is a point which it would be difficult to ascertain; but it undoubtedly enlisted some respectable and influential names, as the list of the committee above given will readily show. On the other hand, it lost M. Lafayette, whose name was a tower of strength in itself. In this position, and with these prospects, it entered on the long ministerial reign of M. Guizot, which has just been so abruptly terminated; but before we allude to their situation at the moment of unexpected victory, we will turn our very circumscribed allowance of time and space to a cursory exposition of some of their most remarkable principles, as set forth by themselves. An accurate summary of republican tenets we, of course, do not profess to give. Such an attempt, indeed, is rendered impracticable by the differences of opinion which are known to subsist among the chiefs of the party. Still there are certain leading points on which there is a general, if not universal, agreement; and some of these conclusions we will endeavour to record.

The desires of those extempore Republicans, whose demonstrations, in the interval of ferment between the expulsion of Charles X. and the accession of Louis Philippe, originated the party, were limited to the natural suggestions of the moment. The abolition of a state church, the substitution of a president for the exiled king, and the extension of the suffrage, at least in the first degree, to every citizen, comprised the sum of their desires. There was no reference to any foregoing constitution

or government, nor any appeal to 1793 for precedent or example. But ideas on this point soon experienced a sudden, and not unnatural change. In brooding over the opportunities they had lost, and comparing with their own theories the constitution to which they found themselves subjected, it was impossible that the Republicans should not recur to the instructive traditions of a former period. Already, in the very first process directed against them, they converted their defence by that singular practice to which we have referred, into a deliberate exposition of the alliance they professed with the principles of the Convention, and that not without a certain apology for its worst excesses. Their avowed object, indeed, was now to restore the chain of ideas which had been so abruptly burst asunder by the empire, and to bring about, if possible, that state of society to which the revolution of 1789, if uninterrupted, would have led. Two years later, the *Société des Droits de l'Homme*\* adopted and circulated anew the famous declaration of the 'Rights of Man,' presented to the Convention by Robespierre; and though this terrible spectre called forth the exorcisms of the press, yet the adhesion given to the manifesto is alleged, by the Republicans themselves, to have been unexpectedly satisfactory. Without accusing the party of any inclination to terrorism, which it must be confessed they resolutely abjure in their writings, although they find some palliation for the difficulties of a tremendous period, yet it is, we think, unquestionable that Robespierre, of all the old republicans, is the great object of their admiration;

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\* It will not be unserviceable to transcribe the demands of the Republican party in 1833 from the programme of this society, published a little before the declaration referred to; as the reader may observe particularly the views taken in the several clauses of all the great political and social questions of the day. The demands comprised:—

‘Un pouvoir central, électif, temporaire, responsable, doué d’une grande force et agissant avec unité; — la souveraineté du peuple mise en action, par le suffrage universel; — la liberté des communes, restreinte par le droit accordé au gouvernement de surveiller, au moyen de ses délégués, les votes et la compétence des corps municipaux; — un système d’éducation publique tendant à élever les générations dans une communauté d’idées compatible avec le progrès; — l’organisation du crédit de l’état; — l’émancipation de la classe ouvrière par une meilleure division du travail; — une répartition plus équitable des produits et l’association; — une fédération de l’Europe, fondée sur la communauté des principes d’où découle la souveraineté du peuple, sur la liberté absolue du commerce, et sur une entière égalité de rapports.’

and there is no saying what direction their political conclusions might have taken, had not the principles of the party been most powerfully affected by the introduction of an element hitherto, at least in such a form, altogether unknown.

This element was the project of *Social* reform. At the revolution of 1830 the theorizings upon this productive subject had been principally confined to the St. Simonians, who had monopolised such discussions, while they left affairs more purely political to the consideration of others. Any person at that time thinking strongly upon the condition of society would have betaken himself, not to the liberal party, but to the followers of St. Simon. A very intelligible kind of fraternisation, however, soon occurred between the theorists of the two parties. The sympathies of the Republicans went clearly with the St. Simonians at the trial of *Enfantin* and his brethren; the names of some of the most celebrated Socialists are found in the list of the prisoners of Lyons; and several leading characters, including M. Carnot, the member of the present government, appear, either simultaneously or successively, as St. Simonians and Republicans. At the moment we are writing, too, the sufferers in the cause of Socialism are coupled with the sufferers in the cause of Republicanism, by the committee appointed to award the acknowledgments of the nation to its benefactors. But it was not until the dispersion of the family of *Menilmontant* by judicial decree that the doctrines of these speculatists were cordially taken up, worked out, and adopted as fundamental principles by the Republican party. In the very heat of the fermentation of July, when it was still conceivable that *Lafayette* might preside over a French commonwealth, *Bazard* had repaired to the old chief with a scheme for regenerating society on St. Simonian principles; but even the experience of 1793 had not prepared the general for any such propositions as these; and he shrank in undisguised amazement from their audacious novelty. Nor had any perceptible progress towards these opinions been made within the next twelve months; for the points touched upon by the Republicans in their first public defence were exclusively national and political, and, at the first insurrection of Lyons, it was remarked that individuals of republican opinions were ranged indiscriminately with or against the workmen,—a circumstance which it is conceived could not have occurred had the sympathy of the party with the *ouvrier* class been what it was subsequently professed to be.

But when the consideration of these Social doctrines was once taken up by the Republicans, they soon superseded in their esteem all other matters of discussion. As distinguished

from old Republicanism, Socialism—that is to say, the science of reconstructing society on entirely new bases—is represented as a higher grade in the mystery of politics; and as an exalted development of the principles hitherto proclaimed.\* Particular forms of government or constitution are completely subordinated to considerations regulating the social relations of citizens; and it seems assumed in the arguments, that when such relations have been placed upon a proper footing, the good government of the country will follow quite naturally as a matter of course; inasmuch as any but a truly popular and excellent administration would be incompatible in its very existence with the order of things supposed. It is remarkable, that one of the most prominent members of the present Provisional Council—M. de Lamartine—joined the Republican party expressly upon Socialist principles; though he was, in this respect, in advance of the body to whom he thus carried the powerful aid of his name. It is especially, and by way of compliment, observed, that whereas most Republicans at that moment confined their ideas to the substitution of a consul for a king, M. de Lamartine became, from a Legitimist, at once a Social Reformer, and presented the spectacle of a convert in his novitiate outstripping his seniors in their common studies.

We much regret that we are precluded from offering even a brief analysis of the doctrines of Socialism as they were successively developed; but we must confine ourselves to the notice of some of the main principles which are professed just now. The leading idea of the new code is contained in the substitution of 'power' for 'right' in the definition of *liberty*,—a notion exactly according with the propositions of Robespierre. The 'liberty' proclaimed by the present French Republicans, consists, not in the *right* to do this or that, but in the *power* to do it. It is not enough, and this is the precise illustration employed by M. Louis Blanc, that every man should enjoy a fair field and a free course, but he should be provided by the state with every appliance for making him exactly his neighbours' equal, in running the race

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\* About this time the terms 'radical,' 'democrat,' and 'republican,' appear generally to be used as synonymous and convertible, but some expressions seem to indicate that the term *démocratique* was distinguished from *républicaine* as implying that section of the party which had announced their socialist mission. For instance, M. Louis Blanc says that there were, in 1831, at Lyons, as in other towns, '*beaucoup de républicains* (this is, probably, a liberal estimate), *mais peu de vrais démocrates.*' And again, in his *Conclusion Historique*, '*la bourgeoisie, qui n'a pas le sentiment démocratique, est cependant républicaine.*'

before them. To tell a man that all pursuits are open to him when he has neither money nor leisure to follow them, is a mockery. Every man has not only a right to rise, but he should be also supplied with the means of rising. If the avocations of any citizen requisite to secure his subsistence are such that he is deprived thereby of facilities enjoyed by other citizens, there is neither liberty nor equality in such a state of things. This is a step beyond St. Simon; who would have allowed to individuals the incidental advantages of the capacity with which each had been gifted, and the services which each could render. It is a retort also to the old point made by Mirabeau, who endeavoured to impugn the doctrine of unconditional equality by reference to these imprescriptible provisions of nature. M. Louis Blanc, however, does not admit that extraordinary services deserve any extraordinary rewards. His theory is, that the allotment of worldly goods by the state should resemble the distribution of food by the father of a family; who in apportioning the victuals would consider not the faculties, but the needs of each child. He describes a man's faculties as indicating what Providence intended he should do for society, and his wants as indicating what Providence intended society should do for him; and he positively pushes this theory to the conclusion that recompences bestowed will thus bear an inverse ratio to services rendered,—so that he who does the most for the state should receive the least, and he who does the least should receive the most.

Some of the steps thought conducive to this grand consummation have already appeared, pretty distinctly, in the acts of the Republican government; and we shall not, it would seem, have long to wait for the result of the problem. Of course these first principles of the school necessitate a total reconstitution of the relations between labourer and employer; though, indeed, we scarcely see how the latter class of citizens is to be perpetuated at all. Labour is defined as a duty which, in some shape or other, every citizen owes to society, and this definition necessarily involves a fundamental alteration in the rights of property. The conclusions on this head have not been stated so unhesitatingly as on others; but, as far as we can judge, the transmission of property is the right which will be first attacked. The position which the Republicans most emphatically condemn is that of inherited independence. They denounce the existence of a class which (not being incapacitated by infirmity) consume without producing; and they would annihilate a system by which the conveniences and luxuries of an unemployed individual are served by the labour of several workmen less comfortably supplied. They adopt Robespierre's

definition of property, by which each citizen is confirmed in the employment and disposal '*de la portion de bien qui lui est garantie par la loi*;' but though they loudly profess the purity of their intentions as regards vested rights, it was clear, even before the late catastrophe, that they were considered likely to avail themselves pretty liberally of the convenient latitude allowed by this definition. When every citizen is to be either employer or employed, the relations between these two capacities assume an extraordinary importance. These relations the Provisional Government, with summary decision, has assumed the duty of regulating; and it only now remains to await the operation of their decrees. This question is more familiar to the people of this country than other abstract inquiries of the Republicans, and its solution is watched with corresponding anxiety. The government has cut the knot; but it is still doubtful whether this is equivalent to untying it. It has decreed, that every workman is entitled to a certain hire for certain labour, and when his powers have failed, to the support of the state. This latter principle we both acknowledge and practise ourselves; nor is there any essential difference between the projected asylums and our own poor houses. But here we stop. We have confessed that a man is legally entitled to subsistence from the land on which he is settled; but in this very confession our belief is implied, that, with a superfluous population, honest labour cannot every day insure an adequate wage. We leave price to be settled by the market, and supply by demand. The Republicans have decided, that every workman *shall* have constant employment, fair wages, and reasonable recreation; and we shall now see how far these conditions of labour are in the command of a government. The Republicans of an earlier day decreed that every citizen *should* be furnished with so much bread for so many sons; but the people were starved notwithstanding. The government have ordained that the master shall pay the workman so much money for so much work, and the workmen have further ordained that no master shall reduce the number of his men. It only remains, and this seems obviously necessary, that the master shall also be secured in the ability to carry on the business. When the experiment shall be thus completed, we shall most gladly accept it, as eminently worthy of imitation. But as yet the sole suggestion offered towards this end by the provisional minister of labour is, the 'substitution of the principle of association for that of competition,'—a suggestion on which we will say more when it has been more intelligibly expounded. Competition appeals to industry,

to hope, and expectation; association, to indolence, improvidence, and suspicion.

Considerable differences of opinion have been expressed within the Republican party respecting the nature and exercise of the executive powers to which these high behests should be entrusted. Some advocated a strong central committee, invested with immense, though temporary powers; while others were unwilling to subject individual liberty to any such fetters as those imposed by the Revolutionary Tribunals and the Directory. Again, some were for perfecting the present system of centralisation, whereas a considerable section were almost as much inclined to decentralisation as the Legitimists themselves. The opinions most plausibly advocated tend towards the latter course; and condemn most unequivocally that centralisation of the present reign which has deprived the provincial cities of any individuality of life or action. Interests of a local or special nature are to be secured by local superintendence; the central power is to be charged with the direction of religion, instruction, and the moral guidance of the people by fêtes and spectacles. There would be no great difficulty in pushing M. Louis Blanc, upon his own assumptions, to the establishment of a state church, and under somewhat stringent rules. This, however, he leaves, perhaps willingly, to be inferred; but he emphatically claims the direction of the theatres as 'one of the most effective legitimate instruments of government.' We are not sure either that the principles of this intelligent republican, if carried out, would not be found as menacing to the freedom of the press as to the freedom of worship, in so far, at least, as may be inferred from his remarks on a very famous event.\*

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\* Some time ago M. Emile de Girardin started *La Presse* at half the price of the other daily Parisian journals. The innovation provoked the vehement indignation of the republican papers, and a duel ensued, in which, it will be remembered, Armand Carrel, the predecessor of M. Thomas and M. Marrast in the editorship of the *National*, fell by the hand of M. de Girardin. In relating a catastrophe which, in French history, is equivalent pretty nearly to the death of Nelson in our own, M. Louis Blanc repeats the denunciations of the republican prints; and it is almost a fair inference, from the terms in which he laments this degradation of '*une magistrature, presque un sacerdoce*' into a '*trafic vulgaire*,' that he would be inclined to imitate King Louis of Bavaria in taking the daily press into the hands of the state. *La Presse* turned out a very successful speculation. Supposed to be secured to the system of the *alliance russe*, it was the chief organ of the Château throughout all the late dynastic negotiations, and its part was supported with undeniable talent. It was from the hands of •



The Republicans relieved their tenets, to some extent, from the revolutionary character which would naturally attach to them by the light in which they professed to regard the established government. According to their ideas, it was a chimera; a constitution fabricated with such prodigious contradictions that it could not possibly long survive, and they were therefore only keeping themselves in reserve for an event which must inevitably occur. They conceived the elective principle in the Chambers and the monarchical principle in the King, as destroying, not as counterbalancing, each other, and they waited till one of the two should devour the other,—a contingency not very different from that which actually occurred. A constitutional monarchy they represent as an impossible form of government. Either the King will rule, and then it becomes absolutism with the encumbrance of a parliament; or the chamber will rule, and then it becomes a republic with the burden of a civil list. They argued, either that the court would corrupt the chamber, or that the electors would cry out against the court; and that whereas, in the first case, the people would not tolerate the disgrace, in the second, they would not suffer that the privileged electors should monopolise the benefit of the triumph. Their paper dissertations on the absurdity of a constitutional government, however administered, were wonderfully clear; one single practical contradiction being all that was opposed to them, and this was the example of England. M. Louis Blanc, however, gets rid of the obstacle by explaining that the English constitution does not, in reality, comprise three powers, but three functions of one power, and that Queen and Commons are, in point of fact, but two developments of the House of Lords!—an announcement which will probably take our countrymen somewhat by surprise. The contests for political place, too, under such a *régime* are described as utterly incapacitating the state, by its internal dissensions, from any vigorous exercise of power externally, whereas the unity of purpose and singleness of will insured by the patriotic spirit animating a republic, would combine all the resources of the state against a common enemy, without any danger of parliamentary opposition. M. Louis Blanc is a very good historian, and a very well-informed man; but it is clear that his researches have never been extended to the annals of the United States or the presidency of Mr. Polk.

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• M. de Girardin, his ancient advocate and defender, and still the editor and proprietor of the paper, that Louis Philippe received his act of abdication to sign!! Journals and journalists are so all-important in France that these details may carry, perhaps, some unusual significance.

Perhaps, however, the general ideas of the Republican party upon foreign politics and the international relations of European states would prove more interesting to our readers than any other selections from their sentiments; and as we are now driven to a choice of omissions, we will devote our remaining hour to the consideration of this subject, and that with the greater willingness, as it certainly comprises some interesting views. There is nothing surprising in the fact that the treaties of 1815 should be distasteful to France. The settlement of Europe, which these transactions established, was the restoration of order which French ambition had disturbed. The treaties were most reasonably conceived in a spirit of suspicion; and directed mainly to the security of Europe against any fresh outbreak from that dangerous quarter. It is true that France was not despoiled of her proper territory, but she was compelled to relinquish her recent conquests, and that under circumstances of humiliation which were not likely to be forgotten. There were two points of view in which the position to which she was consigned have generated incessant ranklings and discontent. In the first place, her own exuberance was circumscribed by the strong arm of combined Europe. Her frontiers were dictated by victorious opponents; and a kingdom was created in the Netherlands to serve as an especial barrier against her chafing power. This confinement she never patiently endured; and it was always represented as a national grievance, that whereas within the last half century England, Russia, and Prussia had been aggrandised by important acquisitions, the French dominions were actually less extensive than they had been under Louis XV.

The next condition was, perhaps, even more annoying. The most remarkable feature of the French *politique extérieure*, is the tutelage of certain other countries which is assumed as appertaining by eternal right to the soil of France. The French people are described by a republican writer as living *plus de la vie des autres nations que de la sienne propre*. The force of France is described as belonging, not to herself, but to 'humanity.' Her policy, '*si communicative et désintéressée*,' is charged as strictly with the vindication of other 'oppressed nationalities,' as with the defence of her own. At the very first exposition of republican principles, one of the accused alleged, as an insuperable objection to a monarchical form of government, that it involved a necessary dereliction of these sacred duties; for that though France might insure her own welfare by her own strength, yet that those nations, naturally placed under her ægis, must be unavoidably sacrificed to the pacific suggestions of dynastic interest. In removing, therefore, these several 'na-

'tionalities' from the protection of France, and in restoring that form of government which interrupted the exercise of these agreeable duties, the treaties of 1815 were extremely unsatisfactory to the nation. We believe that such feelings have been shared by at least three-fourths of the French people; but the republicans naturally carried out such sentiments to exaggeration, and it is on their published opinions that we base our remarks.

At the revolution of 1830, France had got at least her share of such territorial pickings as the *status quo* guaranteed by the treaties permitted. The only European power exempted from the arrangements of the Congress of Vienna was Turkey, and Turkey alone had suffered any dismemberment. But if Servia and Greece had claimed their independence, if the mouths of the Danube had fallen to Russia, and if Mehemet Ali had asserted a title to Egypt, yet France had possessed herself of Algiers. Before Charles X., however, was clear of Rambouillet, it was proclaimed that the treaties of 1815 were again, at last, put to the question. The first interrogatory addressed to the yet uncrowned Louis Philippe by the more ardent of his constituents, was with reference to his determinations on this point; and the Republicans presently went so far as to declare that the revolution of 1830 itself was not so much a vindication of the charter, as an explosion of national spirit against the treaties of 1815. According to their ideas, the moment had now arrived for scattering these insulting records to the winds, and reconstructing altogether the political system of Europe. After what fashion they contemplated making these arrangements, we shall presently see.

The principal modifications of the *status quo*, occurring subsequently to the three days of July, consisted in the separation of Belgium from Holland, and in the establishment of constitutional governments in the Peninsula; but the opinions of the Republicans on these points, though very freely expressed, did not convey any such vehement protests as they recorded upon the unaided and unsuccessful demonstrations of the Italians and Poles at the same period. That a monarchy, even in the best of hands, could possibly discharge the duties or fulfil the destinies of France, the Republicans never thought possible; but the policy which they advocated, *pro re nata*, was this; that the King of the French people should openly demand for the nation the annulment of those treaties which were a standing disgrace to it; that he should have boldly rested himself on the revolutionary party, and, in asserting the rights of France and the liberties of Poland, should have pointed significantly to the

torch which a single word of his could hurl upon the European fabric. The contrary policy of the Citizen King is well known. He soothed, instead of scaring, the absolute powers; he ignored the principles which had opened his own path to the throne; and he was only too happy to purchase a recognition of his own claims, by forbearing from all interference with the claims of others. The Republicans consider this system to have been as unwise as it was disgraceful; for that the state of Europe in 1830 did, in fact, empower France to dictate her own terms of peace and quietness. They assert, it is true, that the mere attitude of menace would have been sufficient; but it is abundantly clear that they were quite prepared to back a word with a blow, and they spared no language in denouncing that pusillanimous spirit which would mar the destinies of France for the sake of so slight a consideration as the possible conflagration of Europe.

With regard to the Belgian question, they conceive of course that the annexation of that country to France is a measure dictated by every consideration of national and territorial convenience, by similarity of manners, by identity of language and religion, and by traditional recollections. Failing that consummation, they deprecated indignantly the substitution of an 'English' sovereign for a French prince, and denounced the whole proceedings of the Conference of London as dictated by the inextinguishable hate entertained of France. M. Louis Blanc ascribes to the malicious intrigues of England those measures from which he traces the suspicious feelings of Belgium against France. He says that the Whig government contrived, first, that the siege of Antwerp should be postponed to the most unfavourable period of the year; and, secondly, that the Belgians, by being debarred from assisting at the operations, should conceive a lasting jealousy against the French, who would be thus executing the behests of a treaty directed mainly against their own aggrandisement, and creating, at their own expense, a spirit hostile to their future interests. Recent occurrences have, at least, shown that the sympathies between the two countries are not so vivid as one of them would wish, whatever may have been the disturbing cause. As regards the Quadruple Alliance by which England and France leagued with the Twin States of the Spanish Peninsula to exclude the absolutist pretenders from their respective thrones, a commiserating ridicule is all that the Republicans bestow on such a transaction.\* We have been

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\* In tracing the *politique* of France at this period, M. Louis Blanc makes a remark to which subsequent events attach some little interest. He says that when the court of the Tuilleries had to decide between

accustomed to consider that this alliance of constitutional states for the promotion of constitutional principles, was a serviceable counterpoise to the influence of less enlightened leagues, and an honourable testimony to the cause of civil freedom; but the Republicans seem almost to prefer the intelligible despotism of a Carlos or Miguel, to what they regard as a monstrous compound of antagonistic principles. Most of the arrows lately shot against the policy of our present foreign secretary were drawn from these Republican quivers.

But it is in the discussion of 'the great Eastern question,' that the views of the Republicans upon European politics are most comprehensively developed. After the picturesque and poetical descriptions we have lately had of this mighty problem, it may seem very commonplace to define it simply as a question of 'what is to be done with the East?' The reforms of Mahmoud II. had put the finishing stroke to the decrepitude of the Ottoman empire, in depriving it of that force which might have been found, at the last, in the spirit of uncorrupted nationality. It was undeniable that the whole fabric would dissolve like a vision, if it were not kept together by the buttresses which the mutual jealousies and common interests of Europe combined to supply. What was to be done with Constantinople, with Alexandria, with Asia Minor?—into whose hands were these mighty prizes to fall? Terrified at the magnitude and consequences of the question, Europe had agreed to maintain a stagnant *status quo*, and at least to postpone, as long as possible, the proposition of a difficulty she could not resolve. But this charmed suspense was rudely interrupted by a rebellious vassal. Mehemet Ali had not only turned his pachalics into a kingdom, but he threatened to cross the Taurus, to lead his cavalry to the Bosphorus, and to replace the effete dynasty of his sovereign on the throne of Osman. Was this to be permitted? and if not, what measures of coercion or of adjustment were to be adopted. France professed a sentimental attachment to the viceroy. His policy seemed to recall the deeds of Napoleon in Egypt, and he pleased the French by unbounded compliments

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the conflicting causes of the Spanish Bourbons, the chance of an unlucky marriage ravishing the throne of Philip V. from the Bourbon line was urged as a strong reason for not countenancing the abrogation of the Salic law; but that Louis Philippe, disregarding all this, *although he had far too much fear of other courts ever to think of precluding the mischief by marrying one of his own sons there*, yet, nevertheless, embraced the cause of Isabella II., lest any feelings of sympathy might furnish the Duc de Bordeaux with an ally in Don Carlos.

and by the practical flattery of imitation. Why should not a new race supersede the old? The unnatural and compulsory cohesion of the unwieldy state could not be insured for ever; and if all that was desired by the powers of Europe was the maintenance of the Turkish empire, and not the sovereignty of the house of Othman, why not let it pass into hands better calculated to secure it without foreign aid? On the other hand, if Mehemet Ali should prove as incapable as Mahmoud to effect a regeneration — which was, indeed, almost beyond the powers of man, — the final catastrophe would only be aggravated and precipitated by such a substitution of dynasties. *Voilà*, says the republican historian, *voilà sous quel aspect l'Orient se présentait quand la révolution de Juillet vint tout à coup remettre en question le partage insolent qu'avaient fait de l'Europe les traités de 1815. Avec l'aide de la Russie nous pouvions anéantir à jamais les traités de 1815, et refaire la carte géographique de l'Europe.* What was to be the aspect of this new map will presently appear; and considering the changes which seem really impending over the existing organisation of the continent, we think this sketch of a republican design for the work will possess some interest.

If the Ottoman empire, as appeared evident, could not subsist in its integrity, it must be partitioned; and this partition, by means of a strict Franco-Russian alliance, could be so arranged as to give the most admirable re-constitution to the civilised world. The Black Sea, Constantinople, and the Asiatic quarter of the globe were to be given to Russia; Egypt, Syria, and the Mediterranean were to be given to France. The united powers of the two contracting parties would be sufficient to assure their respective spoils, especially as all Europe would be gainers by the scheme, excepting the two powers to be expressly annihilated — England and Austria. The restoration of Poland was to form a stipulation, which Russia would hardly refuse against such magnificent indemnities as she would be receiving, and this ancient kingdom, augmented by her old province of Galicia, would thus cover western Europe. Prussia would be conciliated by certain fragments of the Austrian dominions; and Germany, stimulated in her movement towards indivisible nationality, would be attracted towards Berlin as the convenient and natural metropolis of the new federal empire. In every point of view the design was equally grand and convenient. France would be receiving her aggrandisements precisely at the expense of the two nations who were her traditional and hereditary adversaries; and the policy of Henry IV. and Richelieu against Austria, and of Napoleon against England, would thus

experience a complete and unexpected realisation. At the same time, too, that she would be renewing, as it were, her ancient federative system, and constituting herself the acknowledged head of all the second-rate powers. By the spoils relinquished to Russia, Poland would regain her independence; by the isolation and extinction of Austria, Italy would recover her nationality; by the suppression of England, 'Ireland would be saved, and Portugal avenged;' while for the compensation made to her, Prussia would cheerfully surrender her Rhenish provinces, and France would thus recover the frontier of the Rhine, and rule, the mistress of Western Europe, on the shores of her Mediterranean lake! The reader will probably acknowledge that we have now laid before him a striking design for a new map of Christendom; and if he wishes to investigate its divisions a little more closely, he will find them most elaborately laid down in the third chapter of the fourth volume of M. Louis Blanc's History, together with a reflection in which, perhaps, he will hardly coincide, — that *il est à remarquer — et nous insistons sur ce point, — que le plan qui vient d'être exposé n'aurait eu rien de forcé, rien d'arbitraire.*

Yet however little arbitrary it may have appeared, it was thought advisable to meet two possible objections: — First, that of the danger arising from this tremendous aggrandisement of a power already colossal; and secondly, that of the inconsistency, at first sight appearing, in a project which united the most liberal state with the most despotic state for the joint purpose of plundering the world. To the first suggestion it was replied, that the hazard was but imaginary. As M. de Lamartine had pithily and almost poetically expressed it, the *slope* of Russia was towards the east, — meaning that her natural conquests lay in Persia, India, and China; and that it was only by artificially damming up her course in this direction, that she could be precipitated, against the laws of gravitation and nature, upon the plains of Europe. To the second remark, the answer was neither so ready or so ingenious; it being simply argued that Albion was perfidious and Austria undeserving. M. de Lamartine's own view of the eastern question was, it should be observed, considerably less imposing. He considered that the solution of the problem must involve the fusion of the east and west; that whereas the eighty-six million square leagues of Turkey subsisted but seventeen millions of inhabitants, while the like extent of England, France, Spain, Belgium, and Switzerland subsisted ninety-seven millions, it was clearly the appointed time for a popular migration to the East; and that a partition which should leave Egypt, Syria, and Constantinople

under the protectorates respectively of England, France, and Russia, would be the wisest measure for solving this mighty problem, by turning the regeneration of the east to the relief of the west. 'But this,' urges M. Louis Blanc, 'would be abandoning the East Indies to England!'

We have not offered any remarks on the general disposition of the Republican party towards war; any more than we should descant on the general disposition of Quakers towards peace. There can exist no doubt upon this point. The *partie vive du peuple Français, la partie turbulente et guerrière*, are invariably described as presenting the true national type, and as preserving all that is noble in French character from the corruptions of the age. There is no feature of society so emphatically and incessantly denounced in republican writings, as that mercantile egotism, that gross and materialist spirit of traffic, which absorbs all generous and enthusiastic emotions in alarm for property or desire of wealth. The Bourse is represented as the incarnation of the *bourgeoise* spirit — impure and degraded, sullied and sullyng every thing in contact with it.\* Our great missionary of free trade must have read French character through too narrow an opening. Of all developments of civilisation there is not one which, in the eyes of a republican, assumes an aspect so utterly detestable, as that which would resolve national welfare into the material prosperity of the country. Thrift and money-making have no names in the republican vocabulary. These men would give no encouragement to production; they have already publicly condemned competition, and they stigmatise unreservedly every pursuit which detaches a citizen from political (or military) life, to minister to the artificial wants of luxury or the calls of Mammon. It is not obscurely hinted in their confessions of faith, that the factitious wants created by civilisation should be rather extinguished than supplied; and that for the true necessities of a citizen the soil of his country should pretty nearly suffice. We have no doubt that Mr. Cobden's argu-

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\* It is a singular instance of the little pains taken by the republicans in *proving* their theories, that they have altogether overlooked the example of the United States, acknowledged to be really a *peuple libre* (whereas the English constitution is *la plus exécrationnable tyrannie qui ait jamais existé*) in the several manifestations of national character. In describing the fatal and degrading effects of speculation, banking, and commerce, upon the spirit of a people, these pursuits are represented as essentially incompatible with republican institutions; and such as could only have been called into life under the pernicious influence of a constitutional monarchy.



ments upon war and peace would have found an echo in those Chambers which in 1835 conceded to the United States a contested claim preferred in the language of insult, rather than damage the national commerce by the risks of war, or in those counting-houses which have raised the annual imports from England by two millions and a half, or even among those 13,000 grenadiers of the national guard, who have just made such an unfortunate exposure of their own inferiority. But these are precisely the transactions, politics, and parties which are now consigned to the hearty execration of the people. The Chambers are no more; the *bourgeoisie* are beaten; trade is only looked upon as an orange, to be squeezed for the gratification of the operatives; while every day sees an army of half a million augmented in numbers, improved by discipline, and strengthened in equipments, as if by some irresistible instinct—though every court in Europe has sent in its proffer of peace!

We fear that our remarks have been too incoherent and indigested to convey the idea which we wished to give of the men who have been so strangely transformed into the absolute rulers of France. A political party, in our usual acceptation of the words, they could hardly be termed. They were rather a confederacy of political sectarians, not strictly agreed even upon their own abstract theories, having no common object but the consummation of what appeared a most chimerical scheme, and only showing themselves in action by abrupt and gratuitous invasions of public order. Even when we last left them carrying their strength and their energies to that parliamentary party whose views differed least widely from their own, and thus proclaiming a more pacific and constitutional policy, they certainly exhibited no pretensions, either from their numbers or their weight, to any material influence upon the body of the nation. Perhaps we shall hereafter be more accurately informed of the secret operations and successes of the party during the long ministerial reign which has just been closed. It is highly probable, indeed, that the acts of government during this interval should have furnished the republican missionaries with abundant and effective arguments. The deliberate subjection of national welfare to dynastic interests—the parade and expense of military force—the gross and scandalous corruption in high places, which recalled to memory the ‘incorruptibility’ of the very bloodiest *régime* of tradition—nay, even the dramatic representations of old revolutionary scenes which were recently so popular throughout France, must have aided and extended the work of proselytism in a very extraordinary degree. But whatever effect may have been produced on the disposition or

susceptibilities of the people, we do not see any reason for concluding that the republican cause, up to the moment of the last fatal demonstration, had received any serious accessions of weight or talent. The contrary inference appears more reasonable from the list of the leaders now disclosed. There is not a single name, we believe, among the officers of the provisional government which has not conspicuously figured in the scenes we have been describing; so that the chiefs of the party in 1848 appear neither more nor fewer, neither greater nor less, than the chiefs of the party in 1840.

We entertain no doubt whatever that their present triumph resulted, and probably most unexpectedly to themselves, from a recurrence to their old strategy of 1832, which could be practised on this occasion under conditions unusually favourable. How long the design had been resolved upon, we can as yet only conjecture. Perhaps the organisation of political societies in the capital may have been conducted vigorously though secretly for some time past; a supposition which is the less improbable, inasmuch as the law against associations would compel a certain degree of reserve; and as republican writers especially remark of the former clubs, that they were deprived of half their power by the publicity given to their proceedings and their constitution. Then the gathering of the storm was clearly evident as early as last autumn, a circumstance which gave unusual opportunities for preparing and maturing any designs. In the provinces there were the public banquets, those *joyeux essais de revolte*, as a republican writer quietly terms them, at which it will now be remembered there were demonstrations made of a spirit far beyond that in which the meetings had been ostensibly convened, and that the memory of the Convention was toasted at dinners which had been announced as reunions in the cause of electoral reform. In Paris there was the growing unpopularity of the administration, the growing despair of the constitutional opposition, the exasperation of the popular feeling by the displays of military force and the manifest and unmistakable tendency of all things to a crisis. It is clear that the Republicans took their game from events. A vast change of opinion or circumstances was certainly required to warrant their enterprise, since at the last outbreak of Barbes in 1839, not half a dozen people, as is recorded by one of the party, had echoed the republican war-cry. They had need of re-assurance; but the re-assurance was come. They descended again upon the *place publique*, as in times of old, to try the chances of war. As to the quarrels between the *gauche* and the minister, they cared not a sou for them. There was the opportunity of a tumult, and they seized

it. A discontented deputy was just as good a stalking-horse for them as a dead general. They animated and encouraged the people, directed their efforts, and secured their success. Every circumstance of the catastrophe indicates the hands which were guiding the conflict. The mysterious commencement and progress of the insurrection, the cries of the people, the resort to the *bureau* of the *National*, the scene in the Chamber of Deputies, the prompt and fore-determined resolution to accept no compromise, to hear no more of ministries, regencies, or royalties, and the extempore and instantaneous apparition of a Republic from the midst of the chaos—all point with infallible certainty to the character of the event. The republicans in 1848 did just what the republicans did in 1832; but with greater success; and they are now doing just what, if their fortune had served, they would have done then. As to the ostensible pretext of the revolt, they have no more concern for the griefs of M. Odillon Barrot than they would have had for the corpse of General Lamarque.

Considered in this light, the French Republic cannot be regarded as the deliberate creation of a people rising against an oppressive monarchy. Two hundred thousand workmen, or thereabouts, rose willingly enough, it is true, at the instigation of their leaders, and scared the existing government away. This done, they resigned themselves to the best bidders; and the best bidders were the Republicans. As regards the great mass of the people, before the 24th of last month, there is no reason for believing that they were Republicans, any more than that they were Orleanists, or Legitimists, or Imperialists. But the Republican party was the only party with power and promptitude to seize what our neighbours call the 'situation;' and it presented itself to the people, not only fresh from its distinctions in the fray, but with all those advantages of novelty, vigour, promise, and attraction which no other party could command. The parties originally oppressed, and originally resisting, were the dynastic opposition; but the parties triumphant neither commenced the resistance, nor complained of the oppression. The Republicans never protested against ministerial corruption, nor clamoured for electoral reform. They looked upon the differences between the *gauche* and the *centre droit* as a Roman Catholic might look upon the differences between the two connexions of Methodism. They stickled for no observance of the Charter, or limitation of the prerogatives of the Crown. They had conceived no indignation at the substitution of a *gouvernement personnel* for a government by law; on the contrary, they loved to describe such encroachments rather as the natural accidents than as the reprehensible excesses of constitutional

monarchy. What they conspired against was monarchy in the abstract; and their agitation would have been just as well grounded if Louis Philippe had combined the chivalry of Henry IV. with the grandeur of Napoleon. They never waited for the developments of dynastic zeal. They drew up their confessions of faith, and commenced their combinations and their outbreaks before ever the scandal of corruption was bruited about the capital, before the Sovereign claimed the real presidency of the council, before M. Guizot had been dissociated from M. Thiers, before Spanish princesses were purchased by Austrian compromises, before fortifications were raised and extraordinary credits demanded, and while it was yet not certain that the white hat, the green umbrella, and the six million civil list might not continue to be the chosen embellishments of the Citizen King.

There is no plea which the Republicans could less justifiably urge than the plea of oppression. The monarchy was a bad monarchy; but that was not a mortal crime in the eyes of those who held that no monarchy could be good. For their early outbreaks there was not a shadow of a pretext, except to try their fortune.\* The more serious insurrection at Lyons was represented, it is true, as a righteous resistance to the law against associations; and there is no doubt that this enactment, which was but an extension of former statutes, comprises much that is offensive to an English eye. But what was the condition of France at the time the measure was carried? There were associations in Paris and in other large towns, which by most energetic steps of proselytism were extending their affiliations

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\* In the narrative of the insurrection of 1832, it is quietly premised that whereas the government had made a parade of its strength at the funeral of Casimir Perier, 'the parties' burned to try a rival demonstration. At the *émeute of Barbès*, the historian says that the ardent spirits of the republicans were chafed at the ministerial interregnum. These are thought very natural explanations of two attempted revolutions. Just before the last revolt at Lyons broke out, the chiefs of the party, who, after drawing up the order of battle, distributing weapons, and dispensing commands, had retired to rest, were arrested at short notice by the officers of government. M. Louis Blanc describes these persons as 'victims of an unexpected violation 'of the domicile.' This is really not the love of liberty with which an Englishman can sympathise. Whatever may have been the faults of Louis Philippe's reign, that of cruelty to political offenders was not one of them. The republicans had about as much reason to complain of the severity of the police, as the working parties of a besieging army would have when the besieged threw bombs into the trenches.

all over France. The deliberate and undisguised object of these associations was the subversion of the existing government by violence, and no secret was made at their meetings of their resolution to annihilate all sovereignty except the sovereignty of the people. By the rules of several of them it was expressly provided that each member should be furnished with a musket and ammunition; organisation by sections was adopted in order that at the shortest notice, and with the greatest possible effect, they might turn into the streets to resist the law; and at the very period when the enactment was proposed, it is admitted by the republican historian, that so exuberant and sanguine were their spirits, that the members could be with difficulty restrained by their leaders from rushing to measure their strength against the government upon an occasion created by themselves. Even M. de Lamartine, then new to public life, voted on this occasion with the ministry. M. Thiers defended the enactment in a most convincing speech; the arguments of which M. Louis Blanc could only impugn by reasoning which curiously exemplifies the principles of the party. He admits that without the security of the proposed law, the government could not have been maintained; but he asserts that this precise condition proved that it ought to be demolished. According to his sentiments, a government which demands such executive power has signed its own death-warrant; for that, if it cannot sustain uninjured every expression and manifestation of popular will, it has no right to exist at all; and this is declared, it should be remembered, without any pretence for saying that the clubs in question represented the sincere opinions of any considerable fraction of the people. He would not, indeed, allow even to the law that support which the most liberal schools of politics seldom deny to it. To the maxim, *Que force reste à la loi*, he opposes the consideration, *Qui sait si la loi d'aujourd'hui sera celle de demain?* *Il faudra bien que force reste à la vérité.* But *quid est veritas?* These are the ideas which, in our apprehension, renders any stable government so impracticable in France. A Parisian is not content with any ordinary definition of civil and religious freedom. He conceives that he has an indefeasible right to combine and conspire for the violent advancement of any political or social theories he may chance to form; until the right of resistance to oppression becomes travestied by incessant insurrections in favour of any system of government or society for which he and half-a-dozen others may entertain a speculative preference. Upon such principles as these it scarcely appears to us that any government can possibly sustain itself, except one of such despotic strength as no citizen can hope to resist, or of such

miraculous perfection as no Frenchman conceives he can improve.

In concluding these remarks, it is necessary to remind our readers of the relation which they bear to the events on which the gaze of Europe is now actually riveted. The individuals composing the present government of France are, it is true, the identical individuals of that party whose career of successful agitation we have been here describing. We do not even think it probable that any pressure from without, as was reported, influenced them in their abrupt proclamation of the new *régime*. We know of no republican party but that which they themselves emphatically represent, or of any extreme section of it excluded from power. We cannot doubt that a republic was determined upon before the fray began, if chance should be propitious; and that the men who actually proclaimed it on the steps of the Hotel de Ville, needed neither instigation nor pressure. But the acts of a party in power are often different from the professions of a party in opposition. The opinions and principles we have been recording are gathered from professions and avowals in which it may be conceived they were set forth with all the favour and attractiveness which an ardent spirit of proselytism would suggest. The Republicans were then fighting uphill, under serious disadvantages, and against desperate odds. All the arguments, expositions, and pledges which enthusiasm or ingenuity could suggest were required to reconcile people to the revival of the fearful names and bloody traditions of '93. It is therefore under their most seductive aspect, and in their most plausible form, that republican principles have been here represented. Moreover, their decisions are already biassed by those of a rival power. It is very far indeed from being certain, perhaps from being probable, that the eleven councillors of the Hotel de Ville will be allowed to regulate the acts of the nation. They have made the people republicans; but not republicans of their own mould. The spirit which in eight and forty hours was communicated to two hundred thousand converts, suffered very naturally in the electrical rapidity of the transmission. Already have fifty new clubs sprung into being; fully organised, fully armed, and in their own opinion fully competent to guide the destinies of the nation. Already have some of them established themselves in dismantled abodes of religion, like those which supplied such strange lairs to the earlier revolutionists; and perhaps by the time we next write, the Club of the Assumption may be as famous as the Feuillants or the Cordeliers. All Europe may have to regret that the true Republican party are not the rulers of France. For, whatever may be thought of

such principles or practices as we have now been recording, we do not hesitate to express our belief, that the majority of these theoretical republicans, including the chief members of the present government, were as sincere and as single-minded in their intentions as any group of enthusiasts who have figured in the pages of history. Nor have their astounding decrees proceeded, in reality, from any such undigested conceptions of expediency as might perhaps be imagined. Thanks to the unremitting energies of their associations, it is probable that every single question of labour, finance, or representation, on which they have now issued a manifesto, has been discussed, debated, and put to the vote in assemblies of enthusiasts some score of times. As far as theories go, they have no lack of science or experience. It is quite impossible to peruse their writings without being convinced of the talent, research, and thought they have brought to their great work of social perfectibility. Those very volumes of M. Louis Blanc which contain the gravest and most authoritative expositions of impossible schemes, display information which any student might envy, and qualifications of which any historian might be proud — a fact which will perhaps appear the less surprising if we recollect that Augustin Thierry was the secretary of St. Simon. Under the circumstances of the case, we could hardly express a better wish perhaps than that these eleven men should be left, with as little interruption as possible, to work out a problem so momentous as that now propounded. Europe gives them not only licence, but good will — and well may it do so, if there be any truth in those proverbs which teach us what is gained by the experiments of others. Unfortunately, as we write, the intelligence of every successive day leaves this result less and less probable. Calculation, therefore, is at fault amidst such a confusion of chances; but by way of indicating the probable policy of the republican government, if it could hold its way unbiassed through the storm, we subjoin the reflections of one of the present provisional ministry upon the measures which a similar conjuncture, in 1832, would have dictated, had it haply resulted from a similar attempt.

‘Such was the issue of this crisis’ (the insurrection at General Lamarque’s funeral), ‘the most extraordinary, perhaps, of which history makes mention. What would have come of it had the Republicans won the day? It must be admitted that Europe, at this period, had recovered from the stupefaction into which the revolution of July had plunged it; she now knew the secret of our inevitable divisions, she knew how transient was our ardeur, and the empire of the world was no longer for us an affair of a *coup de main*. And, on the other

hand, combined with the supremacy of a class purely Carthaginian, a monarchy, the offspring of insurrection, had been hatching for two years past a brood of bad passions and turbulent interests — here, a heartless egotism, an unscrupulous cupidity, and a fanatical and cowardly conservatism; there — and by the side too of the most laudable aspirations and most generous emotions — a love of disorder, the hatred rather of unjust men than of injustice, and, under the pretext of destroying tyranny, an impatient ardour to take its place. A republican government would, therefore, at one and the same time, have had society to reconstruct, parties to moderate, the people to satisfy and yet control, the wealthier classes to bring down to the due level without despoiling them, and Europe to conquer — Europe on its guard, watchful, and under arms. Now, to meet the demands of such a crisis, what were the resources of the Republican party? As a party in the minority it was the object of prejudices obstinate, though mainly unjust; it allowed itself to be guided by its sentiments rather than its ideas; its nominal chief, M. de Lafayette, had need, and yet had not inclination to be superseded; and as for its actual chiefs, not to mention that they had to contend against jealousies within the party and animosities without, they had not yet extended their studies profoundly enough into the conditions of society to enable them to draw from its regeneration the elements of their influence and the means of their government. At the point, therefore, to which the two years of the reign had conducted matters, and to judge from superficial appearances alone, despotism was a more probable event than liberty, and it would have been easier to start a Buonaparte than a Washington. Yet revolutions have often found in their own bosoms the resources they require: generally, account enough is not taken of all that societies, badly organised, contain within themselves of ideas ready to burst forth, and of great minds without employ. A man who has lived and died in the habit of a soldier or peasant was, perhaps, a better man than Cromwell. And besides, however stormy might have been the fate drawn upon our country by the establishment of a republic, it would certainly never have led us to such a condition of things as that which we now behold — abasement of individual character, indifference to shame and evil, destruction of the true national spirit, and civil death by exhaustion and rottenness.' (*Histoire de Dix Ans*, iii. 403.)

We have spoken only of the past. If our narrative has succeeded in making what has lately taken place in France in any



wise more intelligible than before, we shall have accomplished everything we have had in view. To predict the future, is not our vocation. Indeed, who could venture to predict the future of such a present?—of a state of things so utterly without a precedent in either the history or the philosophy of mankind?

A Provisional Government has been erected in the streets of Paris as rapidly as its barricades, and by the same persons. For the present, Paris, with its National Guards, its prosperous *bourgeoisie*, its ancient habits and boasted civilisation, is submitting to the *coup de main* of a self-willed, resolute minority: and an experiment is apparently peaceably going on, more in opposition to the previous understandings of men, and to their received opinions—more sudden and more complete—than the world has ever before witnessed, in any country or any age.

The absence of union or civil courage manifested in this submission does not warrant us to look to the Departments and their four millions of proprietors with much confidence for the forthcoming crisis: especially, considering that the Republican Clubs, by an audacious management of the electoral ticket, will be nearly certain of carrying their own handed members against a majority, however vast, of scattered and independent votes. But supposing it to be otherwise, and that a National Assembly is returned, representing, not the Clubs of Paris, but the spirit and intelligence of France, what can protect it, as long as it is to meet in Paris, from the crushing influence of which the Provisional Government is substantially the nominee, and by which, whether in presence or behind the scenes, it is now controlling others, and is itself controlled?

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*Wiggers's*, Dr. G., 'Life of Socrates,' 321. See *Plato*.

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